United Nations S/2008/122

Security Council

Distr.: General
12 February 2008

Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General concerning the credentials of the alternate representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the Security Council

Pursuant to rule 15 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the Secretary-General wishes to report that he has received a letter dated 12 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations stating that Harriet Cross has been appointed alternate representative of the United Kingdom on the Security Council.

In the opinion of the Secretary-General, that letter constitutes adequate provisional credentials.

08-24973 (E) 250208

United Nations A/63/62–S/2008/123

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
26 February 2008

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General Assembly
Sixty-third session
Item 85 of the preliminary list*
Maintenance of international security — good-neighbourliness, stability and development in South-Eastern Europe

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Letter dated 19 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Joint Statement by the Chamber Council of the Council of Federation and the Council of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation concerning the consequences of the self-proclamation of independence by the territory of Kosovo (Serbia) adopted on 18 February 2008 (see annex).

I would be grateful if you could have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 85 of the preliminary list of items to be included in the provisional agenda of the sixty-third regular session of the General Assembly, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vitaly **Churkin**

* A/63/50.

08-25291 (E) 280208 290208

Annex to the letter dated 19 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Statement of the Chamber Council of the Federation Council and the Council of the State Duma concerning the consequences of the self-proclamation of independence by the territory of Kosovo (Serbia)

18 February 2008

The Chamber Council of the Federation Council and the Council of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation have adopted the following joint statement of the two chambers of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation concerning the consequences of the self-proclamation of independence by the territory of Kosovo (Serbia).

The Chamber Council of the Federation Council and the Council of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation express their extreme concern that, in violation of the basic rules of international law and the spirit and letter of applicable and unimplemented United Nations Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1244 (1999), the territory of Kosovo (Serbia) has declared its independence and secession from Serbia.

Kosovo separatism would have had no prospects had it not been supported from the outset by Western States, first and foremost the United States of America. There has been an active effort to disrupt the balance between law and force in international relations, to erode the importance of negotiations as a just means of settling conflicts, to ignore the legitimate interests of one of the parties to the conflict and to keep silent about ongoing human rights violations based on ethnicity.

Serbia is a democratic State which exists within internationally recognized borders and is a Member of the United Nations. The action taken today to dismember the territory of the country, whose sovereignty over Kosovo is recognized by the United Nations Security Council, can be explained only as an attempt to carry to its logical conclusion the illegal operation by NATO member States against the former Yugoslavia of 1999. The right of nations to self-determination cannot justify the recognition of Kosovo's independence while at the same time there is a refusal even to discuss similar actions by other self-proclaimed States which have attained de facto independence exclusively through their own efforts.

The Chamber Council of the Federation Council and the Council of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation declare that it is the leaders of the States which have sponsored the regime in Pristina and which now support Kosovo's independence who bear direct responsibility for the virtual breakdown in the negotiating process, in which the Serbian side has shown maximum flexibility and willingness to compromise. They will also bear full responsibility for the inevitable aggravation of existing territorial conflicts in the world and the emergence of new ones, the spread of radical ideas and political

trends resulting from the precedent set by Kosovo and the destructive impact on the entire system of international law and international stability.

The Chamber Council of the Federation Council and the Council of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation also draw attention to resolution 1595 (2008) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which on behalf of all European nations refers to the need for the "continuation of the talks on the basis of the UNSC Resolution 1244 and the attainment of a compromise solution in the near future, with a view to preventing Kosovo from becoming a powder-keg and ultimately a frozen conflict in the Balkans".

The Chamber Council of the Federation Council and the Council of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation fully share the position of the parliamentary forum of the most representative European organization and note that the leaders of the countries which have provoked the breakdown in the negotiating process have placed themselves in opposition to the interests of the peoples of Europe through their actions.

In the face of significant threats to international stability and to the interests of the Russian Federation resulting from the irresponsible policies of Western States, the leadership of the Russian Federation must take all the necessary steps to defend the principles of international law, justice and security throughout the world.

The Chamber Council of the Federation Council and the Council of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation consider it impossible to recognize Kosovo as a sovereign State and to admit Kosovo as a Member of the United Nations and of other international organizations committed to the basic principles of international law. They call on the leadership of the Russian Federation to make appropriate diplomatic efforts to prevent such developments from occurring.

Now that the situation in Kosovo has set an international precedent, existing territorial conflicts must be considered by the Russian Federation in the light of the Kosovo situation and the practical steps of the relevant States concerning the status of Kosovo.

The Chamber Council of the Federation Council and the Council of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation consider that recognition of the independent status of Kosovo would make it necessary to establish a new system of relations between the Russian Federation and self-proclaimed States in the Russian Federation's natural sphere of interest, especially in the post-Soviet area.

S. M. Mironov
Chairman of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

B. V. Gryzlov
Chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

Moscow, 18 February 2008

United Nations S/2008/124

Security Council

Distr.: General
25 February 2008

Original: English

Australia, New Zealand, Portugal and South Africa: draft resolution

The Security Council,

Reaffirming all its previous resolutions and statements on the situation in Timor-Leste, in particular its resolutions 1599 (2005) of 28 April 2005, 1677 (2006) of 12 May 2006, 1690 (2006) of 20 June 2006, 1703 (2006) of 18 August 2006, 1704 (2006) of 25 August 2006 and 1745 (2007) of 22 February 2007, and S/PRST/2008/5 of 11 February 2008,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General of 17 January 2008 (S/2008/26) and recalling the report of the Security Council mission to Timor-Leste which took place from 24 to 30 November 2007 (S/2007/711),

Reaffirming its full commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Timor-Leste and the promotion of long-term stability in the country,

Welcoming the successful conclusion of the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2007 and the formation of a democratically elected government and institutions in Timor-Leste,

Urging the Government and people of Timor-Leste to continue their efforts to resolve their political challenges, *taking note* with appreciation the determination of the Government to restore stability and normalcy while reaffirming their commitment to democracy and the rule of law and *further taking note* with appreciation the commitment of the opposition to support peace and national stability,

Noting that the political, security, social and humanitarian situation in Timor-Leste remains fragile,

Reiterating its call on the leadership and other stakeholders in Timor-Leste to pursue peaceful dialogue and to avoid violent means to resolve differences,

Reaffirming the need for respect for the independence of the judiciary and its responsibility, welcoming the conviction of the leaders of Timor-Leste on the need for justice and their determination to act against impunity, and in this regard *acknowledging* the serious resources constraints of the judicial system, *encouraging* the leadership of Timor-Leste to continue efforts to establish accountability for serious criminal offences committed during the 2006 crisis as recommended by the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry,

08-25129 (E) 250208

Recalling its previous statements on the need to implement fully the "Arrangement on the Restoration and Maintenance of Public Security in Timor-Leste and Assistance to the Reform, Restructuring and Rebuilding of PNTL and the Ministry of Interior", concluded between the Government of Timor-Leste and UNMIT on 1 December 2006, and in this regard, *stressing* the need for constructive engagement between UNMIT police and PNTL in view of developing the capacity and capability of the national police,

Expressing its full support for the role of the international security forces in assisting the Government of Timor-Leste and UNMIT, in the restoration and maintenance of law and stability, in response to the requests of the Government of Timor-Leste,

Recalling that while the manifestations of the current challenges in Timor-Leste are political and institutional in nature, poverty and its associated deprivations also contributed to these challenges, *paying tribute* to Timor-Leste's bilateral and multilateral partners for their invaluable assistance, particularly with regard to institutional capacity-building and social and economic development, and *recognizing* the progress being made in the development of many aspects of governance in Timor-Leste,

Reaffirming its resolutions 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security and 1502 (2003) on the protection of humanitarian and United Nations personnel,

Recognizing the important role that the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) continues to play in promoting peace, stability and development in Timor-Leste, and *expressing* its appreciation for the efforts of UNMIT and the United Nations Country Team, under the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG),

1. *Decides* to extend the mandate of UNMIT until 26 February 2009 at the current authorized levels;

2. *Condemns* in the strongest possible terms the attacks on the President and Prime Minister of Timor-Leste on 11 February 2008 and all attempts to destabilize the country, *noting* that these heinous acts represent an attack on the legitimate institutions of Timor-Leste, and *welcomes* the swift and constructive reaction by the neighbouring countries;

3. *Calls* on the Government of Timor-Leste to bring to justice those responsible for this heinous act, urge all parties to cooperate actively with the authorities in this regard;

4. *Calls upon* the people of Timor-Leste to remain calm, exercise restraint and maintain stability in the country;

5. *Urges* all parties in Timor-Leste, in particular political leaders, to continue to work together and engage in political dialogue and consolidate peace, democracy, rule of law, sustainable social and economic development and national reconciliation in the country, and *expresses* its full support for the continued efforts of the SRSG aimed at addressing critical political and security-related issues facing the country through inclusive and collaborative processes, including the High-Level Coordination Committee and the Trilateral Coordination Forum;

6. *Reaffirms* the importance of ongoing efforts to reach accountability and justice, and *underlines* the importance of the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations Special Commission of Inquiry report of 2006 by the Government of Timor-Leste;

7. *Emphasizes* the need for sustained support of the international community to Timor-Leste to develop and strengthen its institutions and further build capacities in the justice sector;

8. *Requests* UNMIT to continue its efforts, adjusting them as necessary to enhance the effectiveness of the judiciary system, and assist the Government of Timor-Leste in carrying out the proceedings recommended by the Commission of Inquiry;

9. *Calls upon* UNMIT to support the Government of Timor-Leste in its efforts to coordinate donor cooperation in areas of institutional capacity-building;

10. *Further calls upon* the Government of Timor-Leste, assisted by UNMIT, to continue working on a comprehensive review of future role and needs of the security sector, including the Ministry of Interior, PNTL, Ministry of Defence, and F-FDTL; given the sector's importance to long-term stability, *request* UNMIT to intensify its efforts in support of the review in close coordination with the Government of Timor-Leste and relevant donors, and *welcomes* the establishment of a three-tier coordination mechanism established in August 2007 to address the broader challenges in the security sector;

11. *Requests* UNMIT, working with partners, to intensify its efforts to assist with further training, mentoring, institutional development and strengthening of the PNTL with a view to enhancing its effectiveness, including with respect to addressing the special needs of women, while continuing to ensure, through the presence of UNMIT police component, the restoration and maintenance of public security in Timor-Leste through the provision of support to PNTL, which includes interim law enforcement and public security until PNTL is reconstituted;

12. *Welcomes* the Secretary-General's intention to send an expert mission to UNMIT in the first quarter of 2008 to conduct a thorough assessment of the requirements of the national police as well as possible adjustments needed to UNMIT police skill sets; and *requests* him to inform the Council of the finding of the expert mission;

13. *Takes note* of the establishment of Timor-Leste National Recovery Strategy aimed at addressing the socio-economic challenges facing the country, including the issue of IDPs and promotion of sustainable livelihoods and in this regard, *calls upon* UNMIT to continue to cooperate and coordinate with the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes as well as all relevant partners to support the Government of Timor-Leste and relevant institutions and in designing poverty reduction and economic growth policies;

14. *Requests* UNMIT fully to take into account gender considerations as set out in Security Council resolution 1325 as a cross-cutting issue throughout its mandate, and further requests the Secretary-General to include in his reporting to the Security Council progress on gender mainstreaming throughout UNMIT and all other aspects relating to the situation of women and girls, especially in relation to

the need to protect them from gender-based violence, detailing special measures proposed and taken to protect women and girls from such violence;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take the necessary measures to ensure full compliance in UNMIT with the United Nations zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to keep the Council informed, and urges those countries contributing troops and police to take appropriate preventive action and to ensure full accountability in cases of such conduct involving their personnel;

16. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to keep the Council regularly informed of the developments on the ground and on the implementation of this resolution, including in particular progress on his Special Representative's efforts in support for dialogue and reconciliation, and to submit to the Security Council no later than 1 August 2008, a report which includes possible adjustments in UNMIT's mandate and strength to the Security Council, *also requests* the Secretary-General in consultation with the Government of Timor-Leste, to develop a medium-term strategy with appropriate benchmarks to measure and track progress, and to submit further reports as and when he considers appropriate;

17. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

United Nations S/2008/125

Security Council

Distr.: General
22 February 2008

Original: English

Letter dated 22 February 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Uganda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

At the request of the States members of the Great Lakes Region Initiative, I am annexing herewith the statement of the Executive Secretary of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, Ambassador Liberata Mulamula, on the first anniversary of the signing of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region (see annex).

As Uganda is Chair of the Great Lakes Region Initiative, I should be very grateful if the statement could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) L. B. **Lukwiya**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

08-25084 (E) 260208

Annex to the letter dated 22 February 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Uganda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: English and French]

Statement of the Executive Secretary of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region on the first anniversary of the signing of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region

15 December 2007

It is my great pleasure and honour to send you my warmest wishes on this very first anniversary of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region signed on 15 December 2006 by the leaders of our region.

On that memorable day, member States reaffirmed their commitment and determination to transform the Great Lakes region from a zone of hostilities, conflicts and underdevelopment into a zone of security, stability, shared growth and prosperity for our people.

The emphasis on collectively seeking and finding viable solutions for our people stems from the fact that the people of the Great Lakes region are indeed linked to one another through common history, culture, language, and experience.

Ever since, there have been positive developments as well as challenges in meeting the aspirations and the implementation of the vision of the people of the Great Lakes region as enshrined in the Dar Declaration and the Pact.

Progress has been registered in the area of peace and security, democracy and good governance, economic development and regional integration, humanitarian and social issues. In this regard, internally displaced persons and refugees are slowly returning to their homes, border conflicts are amicably getting resolved, leaders in the region are regularly meeting to review their challenges and progress, institutions for democracy and good governance are increasingly strengthened, and regional integration is taking shape among the member States. Most encouraging, the Pact is steadily being ratified and mechanisms for implementing are getting in place at national and regional level.

However, the region is still facing some challenges. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the security situation in the eastern part has deteriorated due to the continued presence of the armed groups and negative forces destabilizing communities. In Uganda, the peace agreement between the Government and the Lord's Resistance Army is not yet implemented. Likewise in Burundi the peace agreement signed between the Government and the last rebel movement Palipehutu-FNL is still limping.

The biggest humanitarian crisis of this decade is still taking its toll in the Darfur region. The northern part of the Central African Republic is still insecure, with activities of the popular Army for Restoration of the Republic and Democracy rebel group.

In addition to man-made disasters, the region was faced with problems of natural disasters such as floods and epidemics, Ebola and HIV/AIDS. This brings to the fore the need to renew our efforts to find a regional solution to the humanitarian, environmental and health concerns.

As we celebrate this first anniversary, I encourage all of you to familiarize and contribute to the implementation of the Pact. Indeed, the Pact provides a framework for durable solutions to the challenges facing our region.

It was my wish to have the Pact come into force as we celebrate this anniversary. It is still my dream. Only one country remains out of the eight that needs to have ratified the Pact before it enters into force.

There is hope.

United Nations S/2008/126

Security Council

Distr.: General
25 February 2008

Original: English

Letter dated 25 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Indonesia for the month of November 2007 (see annex). This assessment has been prepared under my responsibility, after consultation with the other members of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) R. M. Marty M. **Natalegawa**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

08-25179 (E) 140308

Annex to the letter dated 25 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Indonesia (November 2007)

Introduction

Under the presidency of Indonesia in November 2007, the Security Council held 26 meetings, including 12 consultations of the whole, two private debates, three open debates, two debates, two briefings, and one private meeting. The Council adopted two resolutions and two presidential statements, and agreed on four statements to the press.

On 2 November, the Security Council adopted its programme of work for the month in its first consultation under Indonesia's presidency, and, following the adoption of the programme, the President of the Council briefed the press on its contents.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, N. Hassan Wirajuda, presided over an open debate on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security on 6 November.

Africa

Great Lakes region: northern Uganda

On 13 November, in consultations of the whole, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas, the former President of Mozambique Joaquim Chissano, briefed the Council on the recent talks between the Lord's Resistance Army and the Government of Uganda and the Juba peace process. The President made a statement to the press, in which Council members stated that they were encouraged by the progress to date and the improvements in the security and humanitarian situation in northern Uganda. Council members reiterated their support for a negotiated settlement and their hope for an expeditious conclusion to the peace process. They stressed the importance of the international community and the Government of Uganda maximizing the opportunity provided by the peace process to make further sustained progress on improving living conditions in northern Uganda. Council members also reiterated that those responsible for serious violations of human rights and international law should be brought to justice. The Council members urged the Lord's Resistance Army to release immediately all women, children and other non-combatants.

Ethiopia and Eritrea

On 13 November, consultations of the whole were held on Ethiopia and Eritrea, in which the Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions (Department of Peacekeeping Operations), Dmitry Titov, briefed the Council. At the end of the consultations, members of the Council agreed on a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/43), in which the Council members urged both

Ethiopia and Eritrea to take concrete steps to implement the decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission to delineate their disputed border, as well as to comply fully with the Algiers Agreements and prior Security Council resolutions and statements of its President including on the issue of demarcation. The Council further called upon the parties to refrain from using force, to normalize their relations, to promote stability between them, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace in the region. The Council commended the operations of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Sudan

On 14 November, in consultations of the whole, the Council heard a briefing from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, about preparations for the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

On 27 November, the Council held a debate, followed by consultations, on the Sudan. During the debate, the Council received briefings by the Special Envoy Jan Eliasson, and the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. The Permanent Representative of the Sudan participated in the debate. The Council evaluated the progress on the recent political developments as well as preparations for the transfer of authority from the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) to UNAMID.

The Special Envoy stressed that the humanitarian, security and political situation had an impact on the deployment of the peacekeeping operation, adding that the first two elements continued to deteriorate.

He said that the discussion had reinforced the facilitators' efforts to get all parties to engage. Those who had not yet participated would, it was hoped, do so, and Member States should help in that regard. The humanitarian and peacekeeping operations required huge expenditures. It was essential that political conditions be made conducive to success. The Special Envoy reiterated the importance of the participation of civil society groups in talks and thanked Council members, along with the Sudan, for their support for civil society participation.

The Under-Secretary-General said that the UNAMID deployment process was at a crossroads. There were a number of issues to be resolved. The first issue was the security and humanitarian situation on the ground. The second issue was that of fundamental challenges faced by UNAMID in the areas of force generation, the final determination of the composition of the force, and a number of impediments to deployment being put in place by the Government of the Sudan.

He also said the first elements of the heavy support package for AMIS had been deployed, including a 140-strong formed police unit from Bangladesh and a 135-strong engineering unit from China. A second formed police unit was expected on 15 December 2007. Most of the staff officers were expected in the force and sector headquarters by the end of December.

Following that intervention, representatives of all 15 Council members made statements in which they all agreed on the need for progress on the political, humanitarian and security fronts in order for the deployment of UNAMID to succeed. Most speakers expressed concern over the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation, the obstacles to deploying UNAMID, and the lack of

cohesion among rebel groups. Council members also emphasized the need for enhanced cooperation by the Government of the Sudan with the deployment of UNAMID.

Somalia

On 19 November, in consultations of the whole, the Council received a briefing on recent developments in Somalia from the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Haile Menkerios. The President of the Council, in an oral statement to the press, expressed the strong concern of the Council members about the deteriorating political, security and humanitarian situation in the country. The President said that the members also underlined the need to continue to actively develop contingency plans for the possible deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force as part of an enhanced United Nations integrated strategy in Somalia. The Council members also called on all Somali stakeholders to renounce violence and engage in an all-inclusive peace process, and expressed support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, in promoting dialogue, consultations and reconciliation, as well as support for the transitional federal institutions in implementing the Transitional Federal Charter and the conclusions of the National Reconciliation Congress. The Council also expressed support for the African Union Mission in Somalia and underlined the need to continue to actively develop contingency plans for the possible deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force as part of an enhanced United Nations integrated strategy in Somalia, as well as for the provision of international assistance to this area.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

In response to the signing of a joint communiqué by the Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda on 9 November in Nairobi, the Council agreed on a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/44) on 21 November. The joint communiqué contained a common approach to end the threat posed to peace and stability in both countries and the Great Lakes region, particularly to the definitive settlement of the problem of illegal armed groups in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In the presidential statement, the Council noted that the communiqué was an important milestone towards the definitive settlement of the problem of illegal armed groups, in particular the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR), ex-FAR/Interahamwe and the dissident militia of Laurent Nkunda, and reiterated its demand that those groups lay down their arms and engage voluntarily and without preconditions in their demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration. The Council also encouraged the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda to implement fully their commitments in the communiqué and to continue to cooperate to solve their common security concerns. It stressed its readiness to facilitate and support the implementation of those commitments, in particular through measures against additional individuals and entities, including FDLR and ex-FAR/Interahamwe, pursuant to resolutions 1596 (2005) and 1649 (2005).

On 29 November, the Council held a meeting with the troop-contributing countries for the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic

of the Congo, followed by consultations of the whole. During the consultations, the Council members heard a briefing from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, William Lacy Swing.

Burundi

On 28 November, the Council heard a briefing from the Facilitator of the Burundi Peace Process and Minister for Safety and Security of South Africa, Charles Nqakula, at an open meeting about Burundi. In his briefing, the Facilitator said, inter alia, that, according to a comprehensive ceasefire agreement signed by the Government of Burundi and the Palipehutu-Forces nationales de libération (FNL) on 7 September 2006, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process should have started within 72 hours of signing. He stressed that, although that had not happened, there were now some Palipehutu-FNL combatants ready to submit to the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, but help was needed to start and complete the process.

He also said that, with help from the international community, in coordination with the political directorate of the mediation, he intended to resolve some of the political problems in the search for peace, which would be made more possible if the FNL leadership would come into Burundi for that purpose. He pleaded for United Nations assistance to oversee the disarmament and reintegration of FNL, so that the facilitation programme could be successfully completed.

At the end of the briefing, the President of the Council read a statement to the press, already agreed by the Council members, in which the Council members commended the role played by the Facilitator, the Regional Initiative, the African Union and the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi in support of the Burundi peace process. They also noted with appreciation the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in helping Burundi to achieve long-term peace and stability. Members of the Council also welcomed the Government's efforts to promote dialogue, national reconciliation and social harmony in Burundi, and called on all political stakeholders there to maintain the spirit of consensus-building and inclusiveness that had enabled them to achieve a successful transition in their country.

Asia and the Middle East

Lebanon

The Council was briefed in its consultations of the whole on 5 November by the Special Envoy, Terje Roed-Larsen, about the Secretary-General's recent report on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), concerning Lebanon (S/2007/641). In the report, the Secretary-General stated that political dialogue must allow the election of a new president before the constitutional deadline of 24 November 2007. He also expressed concern at signs that most political parties in Lebanon were apparently preparing for the possible further deterioration of the situation.

At the end of the consultations, the Council members agreed on elements of an oral statement of the President of the Council to the press. In the statement, the Council members stressed the need to hold free and fair presidential elections in

conformity with the Lebanese Constitution and without any foreign interference and influence. They also reaffirmed the need for all parties to resolve all political issues on the basis of reconciliation and national dialogue.

Afghanistan

In response to the suicide attack on 6 November against a visiting parliamentary delegation in Baghlan, northern Afghanistan, upon the agreement of the Council members, on 8 November, the President of the Security Council read a statement to the press, in which Council members condemned in the strongest terms the suicide attack that had caused numerous deaths in the town of Baghlan. They noted that the terrorist attack was one of the deadliest in Afghanistan in recent years and urged the Afghan authorities to make every effort to bring the perpetrators and organizers to justice. The members of the Council reiterated their concern at the increasing threat to the local population, national security forces, international military and international assistance efforts posed by the Taliban, Al-Qaida, illegal armed groups, criminals and those involved in the narcotics trade, and reiterated that no terrorist act could reverse the path towards peace, democracy and reconstruction in Afghanistan, which is supported by the people and the Government of Afghanistan and the international community.

Myanmar

On 13 November, the Council held a debate on Myanmar, to receive a briefing from the Secretary-General's Special Adviser, Ibrahim Gambari, on his recent visit to the country and the region. Delegations of concerned countries, including Japan, Myanmar and Singapore also participated in the debate. Following the debate, the Council held consultations of the whole which ended with an agreement of the members on elements regarding the situation in Myanmar to be orally presented by the President of the Council to the press.

On 14 November, the Council members agreed on a formal statement to the press containing the same elements as those of the oral statement made by the President the day before. In the formal statement, members of the Council, inter alia, welcomed the mission of the Secretary-General's Special Adviser, and reaffirmed their support for the continued efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Adviser. They reaffirmed the expectations of the Security Council as set out in its presidential statement of 11 October 2007. They looked forward to the earliest possible return of the Special Adviser to Myanmar, and encouraged the Government of Myanmar to meet its commitment to cooperate fully with the United Nations. They also confirmed their intention to keep developments in Myanmar under close review.

The situation in the Middle East

On 30 November, the Council heard a briefing from the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, B. Lynn Pascoe, on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Under-Secretary-General informed the Council members about the conference in Annapolis, at which the Prime Minister of Israel, Ehud Olmert, and the Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas, had reached a joint understanding. The joint understanding includes an agreement to launch immediate good-faith bilateral negotiations to conclude a peace treaty, resolving all

outstanding issues without exception before the end of 2008; an agreement on a joint steering committee that would meet continuously; and a commitment to immediately implement their respective obligations under the road map.

The Under-Secretary-General said that the Annapolis conference had also included extensive discussion of international support for building the institutional capacity of the Palestinian Authority, setting the stage for the upcoming Conference in Paris. In preparation for Paris, he said, the Palestinian Prime Minister, Salam Fayyad, had circulated a summary of the Palestinian reform and development plan for 2008-2010, which demonstrated fiscal responsibility and political commitment to reform. It also laid out what Israel and the international community should do to assist the Palestinian Authority.

The Under-Secretary-General also said that the Secretary-General looked forward to Robert Serry of the Netherlands becoming the new Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and his Personal Representative to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority.

Turning to developments in Lebanon, he said there had been six postponements of a parliamentary session to elect the country's new President in the past two months, despite extensive diplomatic efforts, continued mediation and a visit by the Secretary-General.

With regard to the reconstruction of the Nahr el-Bared Palestinian refugee camp, estimated to cost $200 million, he said the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East had received only $28 million of its flash appeal for $54 million to meet immediate and longer-term needs.

Europe

Bosnia and Herzegovina

After extensive consultations held on 15 and 16 November, the Council decided that the meeting of 16 November on the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina would be a closed (private) meeting. Under this format, on 16 November, members of the Council and Nikola Spiric, Acting Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Miroslav Lajcak, High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina; and the representatives of Portugal (on behalf of the European Union) and Serbia had an exchange of views. On 21 November, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1785 (2007), by which it authorized the Member States acting through or in cooperation with the European Union to establish for a further period of 12 months a multinational stabilization force (EUFOR) as a legal successor to SFOR under unified command and control.

Thematic issues

International Court of Justice

The Council held a private debate on 2 November to consider the item entitled "Briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice". Members of the

Council heard a briefing from Judge Rosalyn Higgins, President of the International Court of Justice, and had an exchange of views with her.

Role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security

On 6 November, the Council held an open debate on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security, presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, N. Hassan Wirajuda. The Secretary-General was present and made a statement, and more than 40 other speakers participated, including representatives of regional and subregional organizations that had been invited.

In his statement, the Secretary-General said that United Nations partnerships with such organizations were stronger and more active than ever, and that he was committed to helping build up the capacity of regional and subregional organizations to undertake conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacekeeping tasks in their respective regions.

The Secretary-General noted the joint African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force and political mediation in Darfur, and the cooperation with the European Union in the protection of civilians in Chad and the Central African Republic, as well as the work of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on Myanmar, among other partnerships developed during the year. Other collaborations had been pursued with the Economic Community of West African States, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organization of American States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Such cooperation had made it possible to respond more quickly at the outset of crises and more effectively in post-conflict peacebuilding.

As an outcome of the thematic debate, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/42), in which it recognized the important role of regional and subregional organizations in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, and invited all Member States to contribute to strengthening the capacity of those organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security, underlining their importance in peacekeeping, peacebuilding, the fight against terrorism and illicit weapons, and other collective efforts. The Council also reaffirmed that it had the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, recognized that regional organizations were well positioned to understand the root causes of conflicts close to home and to influence their prevention and resolution, and encouraged regional and subregional organizations to strengthen and increase cooperation among them. It stressed that contributions by regional organizations must be made in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. The Council also recalled its determination to further cooperation with such organizations and welcomed recent instances of cooperation between the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union.

Briefings by Chairmen of subsidiary bodies

On 14 November, the Council held an open debate to hear briefings by the Chairmen of three subsidiary bodies of the Council, namely the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities; the Committee established pursuant to

resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism; and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), concerning the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Speaking on behalf of the Chairmen of the three subsidiary bodies, Ambassador Johan Verbeke (Belgium) stated that the three Committees strove to work closely together, both directly and through their respective group of experts, who had, for instance, jointly participated in visits to States. The common strategy of assisting the non- and late-reporting States was currently being jointly implemented. The three subsidiary bodies recognized the importance of sharing information and analyses, and working together in their relations with other relevant international, regional and subregional organizations. The three expert groups were also cooperating within the framework of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. Although the primary responsibility for implementing the obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions is vested in Member States, the interaction with them was deemed to be essential.

In his capacity as the Chairman of the Al-Qaida and Taliban sanctions Committee, Ambassador Verbeke said that the sanctions regime set out in resolution 1267 (1999) continued to be a powerful instrument in the fight against terrorism related to Al-Qaida and the Taliban. While the Committee had been striving over the past six months to further improve the quality of the consolidated list and was committed to continue to do so, an appeal was made to all States to increase their support and assistance to the Committee and the Monitoring Team. The Committee continued to explore ways and means to enhance a mutually beneficial dialogue with States, including through open briefings by the Chairman, visits to selected countries, meetings with representatives of Member States, and cooperation with international, regional and subregional organizations.

Speaking as Chairman of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, Ambassador Ricardo Alberto Arias (Panama) said the Committee's work was divided into three categories, namely, monitoring and promoting the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001); facilitating technical assistance; and full implementation of resolution 1624 (2005). With regard to resolution 1373 (2001), the Committee continued to analyse the preliminary implementation assessments for all Member States. The Committee held its fifth special meeting with international, regional and subregional organizations in Nairobi from 29 to 31 October 2007. The main focus in the future would be to work proactively with States on both the monitoring and assistance parts of the mandate. As the mandate of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate would expire at the end of the year, he encouraged Member States to present their ideas in that regard for the Council's due consideration.

In his capacity as Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), concerning the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Ambassador Peter Burian (Slovakia), said that the Committee had adopted new measures to speed up the reporting process. A thematic discussion, held in October 2007, had recognized the need to pursue a phased approach to the Committee's outreach activities and determined that future activities would focus less on reporting and more on helping States to fully implement the resolution. An effort was made in all outreach activities to explain the need for States to be specific in their requests for assistance, and to make it easier to match them with offers of assistance.

Protection of civilians in armed conflict

On 20 November, the Council held an open debate on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. Present at the open debate were the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, John Holmes. Representatives of 33 members and non-members of the Council took part in the open debate and made statements.

In his opening remarks, the Secretary-General expressed regret that civilians continued to suffer grievous violence in conflict situations around the world. He urged the Council to create a working group to ensure their protection. Stressing that the Council's words must have their greatest impact on the ground, he pointed out the timeliness of the meeting, since it was on the same date in 1945 that the war crimes trials had begun in Nuremberg, Germany. Sixty-two years later, civilians continued to pay a dreadful toll in conflicts, from the Sudan to Afghanistan and Iraq. Women, men, girls and boys suffered unimaginable violations of humanitarian and human rights law.

Introducing the Secretary-General's report on the subject (S/2007/643), the Under-Secretary-General said its recommendations were critical to more systematic consideration by the Council of civilian protection. He said that suicide attacks, a feature in a growing number of conflicts, were a particularly disturbing way of deliberately targeting civilians. However, he said, any military response must itself comply with humanitarian law and show respect for the human and cultural dignity of those already endangered. The Secretary-General's report contained a number of proposals with regard to compliance with international humanitarian law in situations of asymmetric warfare, including the use of cluster munitions.

The Under-Secretary-General also said that consideration should be given to referring grave incidents of rape and other forms of sexual violence to the proper national, local and regional mechanisms. The Council should seek creative ways to support States in holding perpetrators accountable, for example through the establishment of ad hoc judicial arrangements. Other actions proposed in the report concerned more robust legal protections for humanitarian workers, against whom attacks continued to increase. There was also a need to address housing, land and property issues much earlier in a conflict to prevent violence arising from disputes over them.

Most speakers agreed with the urgent need to protect civilians more effectively, systematically and proactively.

International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia

On 28 November, the Council, by resolution 1786 (2007), appointed Serge Brammertz as Prosecutor of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, for a term of four years, beginning on 1 January 2008.

Other activities

Annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly

On 12 November, the presidency of the Council introduced the Council's report for the period from 1 August 2006 to 31 July 2007 at a meeting of the

General Assembly. Among other highlights, the representative of Indonesia said that the Council had held 224 formal meetings, 184 of which were public, as well as 22 meetings with troop-contributing countries.

The Council held 192 consultations and adopted 71 resolutions in addition to 52 presidential statements. The President of the Council also stressed the importance of effective working methods and continued to enhance effectiveness and transparency. The participation of non-members had been accommodated in various open debates and Council members continued to pay attention to the Security Council mandate review within the relevant ad hoc committee.

Tarrytown workshop

On 15 and 16 November, representatives of Council members, as well as representatives of the newly elected members of the Council, attended the fifth annual workshop for newly elected members of the Security Council, which was hosted at the Tarrytown House Conference Center by the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations, in cooperation with the Center on International Organization of Columbia University, the Security Council Affairs Division of the Secretariat, and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research. The objective of the workshop was to help to familiarize the newly elected members with the practice, procedures, and working methods of the Council so that they might "hit the ground running" when they joined the Council.

Security Council Mission to Timor-Leste

The Security Council sent a mission to Timor-Leste from 24 to 30 November 2007, led by Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo (South Africa). The mission was aimed at, inter alia, discussing and exchanging views with the Timorese authorities on the ways and means to assist the country in developing the capacities necessary to build on security and democratic and other gains achieved thus far, as well as underlining the long-term commitment of the international community to stabilization and development in Timor-Leste, and the need for the continuing support of bilateral and international partners to Timorese efforts towards self-reliance.

International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

On 29 November, the Permanent Representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Council members, made a statement at the special meeting held at United Nations Headquarters to observe the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. In his statement, he said, among other things, that the Day of International Solidarity with the Palestinian People provided an opportunity for the international community to reflect upon its role and contributions in advancing the objective of the two States vision. It was the day when the international community reaffirmed its commitment to the Palestinian people and the establishment of an independent and sovereign State of Palestine.

In addition, he said, the Council recognized the crucial need to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which would contribute to the security and stability of the Middle East, and to put in place a process with the goal of creating an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian State as envisioned in the road map and the Arab Peace Initiative, and the joint understanding announced at Annapolis.

In that regard, he added, the Council underlined the importance of the donor conference to be held in Paris on 17th December to mobilize the donors, following on from the Annapolis conference, and to provide financial and political support for the Palestinian Authority to enable it to build a viable and prosperous Palestinian State.

He concluded that, as mandated by the Charter, it is the responsibility of the Council to assist Palestine to achieve sustainable peace and to maintain peace and security in the region. The Council will, therefore, continue to be actively seized of the matter.

United Nations S/2008/127

Security Council

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26 February 2008

Original: English

Letter dated 21 February 2008 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the letter from the President of the Security Council dated 21 December 2007 (S/2007/754) in which the Council approved the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) for three years, until 31 December 2010, and recognized the critical role played by that office and by my Special Representative in promoting an integrated approach towards peace and progress in that subregion.

In that connection, I wish to inform you of my intention to appoint Said Djinnit of Algeria as my new Special Representative for West Africa and head of UNOWA. Mr. Djinnit, who is currently serving as Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union Commission, will take up his functions on 1 April 2008. He will replace General Lamine Cissé, who has been serving as Officer-in-Charge of UNOWA since September 2007 when Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah was reassigned as my Special Representative for Somalia.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Messrs. Ould-Abdallah and Cissé for their dedicated contributions to United Nations efforts for peace and progress in West Africa.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **Ban** Ki-moon

08-25305 (E) 270208

United Nations S/2008/128

Security Council

Distr.: General
26 February 2008

Original: English

Letter dated 26 February 2008 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that your letter dated 21 February 2008 (S/2008/127) concerning your intention to appoint Said Djinnit of Algeria as your Special Representative for West Africa and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa has been brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council. They take note of the intention expressed in your letter.

(*Signed*) Ricardo Alberto **Arias**
President of the Security Council

08-25311 (E) 270208

United Nations A/62/709–S/2008/129

General Assembly
Security Council

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General Assembly
Sixty-second session
Agenda item 17
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Identical letters dated 26 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On the instructions of my Government, I transmit to you herewith a statistical summary of Israeli violations during the period from 15 to 21 February 2008 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 17, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nawaf **Salam**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

08-25298 (E) 280208 280208

Annex to the identical letters dated 26 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Subject: Israeli violations, acts of aggression and other activities from 15 to 21 February 2008, inclusive

Air violations

On 15 February 2008 between 1310 and 1400 hours, an enemy Israeli military aircraft flew at high altitude over the areas of Tibnin, Bint Jubayl, al-Naqurah, al-Nabatiyah and Jazzin.

On 16 February 2008 between 1150 and 1205 hours, an enemy Israeli reconnaissance aircraft flew at high altitude over the area of al-Naqurah.

Between 2205 and 2320 hours, an enemy Israeli reconnaissance aircraft flew at high altitude over the areas of al-Naqurah and Bint Jubayl.

Between 2205 and 2220 hours, over the sea off Ra's al-Naqurah, an enemy Israeli helicopter flew over Lebanese territorial waters.

On 17 February 2008 between 0500 and 1200 hours an enemy Israeli reconnaissance aircraft flew at intervals over the areas of al-Naqurah, Bint Jubayl and al-Nabatiyah.

Between 1406 and 1700 hours, an enemy Israeli reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace over the sea of Tyre heading north as far as Beirut, and circled over Beirut and the southern areas, then departed over the sea off al-Naqurah.

Between 1700 and 1725 hours, an enemy Israeli reconnaissance aircraft flew over the area of al-Naqurah.

On 20 February 2008 between 1800 and 1815 hours, an enemy Israeli reconnaissance aircraft flew over the area of al-Naqurah.

Between 2010 and 2050 hours an enemy Israeli military aircraft flew at intervals over the area of al-Naqurah.

On 21 February 2008 between 1005 and 1115 hours, two Israeli military aircraft violated Lebanese airspace over the Shab'a farmlands, circled over all areas of Lebanon and then departed over 'Alma al-Sha'b.

Between 1144 and 1230 hours, four enemy Israeli military aircraft violated Lebanese airspace over Dayr Mimas, circled over all areas of Lebanon and then departed over 'Alma al-Sha'b.

Between 1835 and 2125 hours, an enemy Israeli reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace over the sea off Tyre and circled over the South, then departed over the sea off al-Naqurah.

Sea violations

None.

Acts of aggression in the field

On 15 February 2008 between 1330 and 1600 hours at the crossing point by the town of Kafr Killa, three Israeli farmers pumped runoff water from the Israeli side towards a ditch alongside the technical fence in the direction of Lebanese territory, where two tankers belonging to the Spanish unit were used to transport the water elsewhere.

On 17 February 2008 between 1000 and 1530 hours at the crossing point by the town of Kafr Killa, a number of Israeli farmers pumped runoff water from the Israeli side towards a ditch alongside the technical fence in the direction of Lebanese territory. At 1250 hours, a tanker contracted to the Spanish unit was used to transport the water elsewhere.

Between 1330 and 1340 hours near the Mays al-Jabal Gate, the Israeli enemy pumped water from inside the occupied Palestinian territories in the direction of Lebanese territory.

On 18 February 2008 at 0745 hours at the crossing point by the town of Kafr Killa, the Israeli enemy pumped water from inside the occupied Palestinian territories into a ditch alongside the technical fence inside Lebanese territory, where it began to overflow onto the 'Udaysah — Kafr Killa public highway. Lebanese Army patrols and the Spanish unit operating within UNIFIL attended, siphoned off the water and transported it elsewhere by means of tankers.

On 21 February 2008 between 0745 and 1630 hours at the crossing point by the town of Kafr Killa, the Israeli enemy pumped water from inside the occupied Palestinian territories into a ditch alongside the technical fence inside Lebanese territory, where the water began to overflow onto the 'Udaysah — Kafr Killa public highway and from there into the orchards of the town of Kafr Killa. At 1030 hours, a UNIFIL tanker equipped with a siphon came and siphoned off the water.

Israeli activities

On 15 February 2008 from 2100 hours inside the occupied Palestinian territories in the orchards which extend from the settlement at Metulla to that at Misgav Am, close to the towns of 'Udaysah and Kafr Killa, stationary motorized enemy patrols (as ambushes) were observed at a distance of approximately 500 metres from one another, with an average of 3 to 4 vehicles per patrol moving between them.

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Security Council

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27 February 2008

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Letter dated 1 February 2008 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to write to you regarding the continuation of the efforts of my Special Envoy for Darfur, Jan Eliasson.

As you will recall, my Special Envoy for Darfur and the African Union Special Envoy, Salim Ahmed Salim, had anticipated that the Darfur political negotiations, which they launched in Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on 27 October 2007, would have been concluded by January 2008. However, the negotiations did not evolve as expected, and it is now clear that additional efforts will be required. In this context, the Special Envoys are now intensifying their consultations with all relevant actors in anticipation of the parties engaging in substantive negotiations in early 2008.

In order to allow for the continuation of the mediation role of my Special Envoy, I have extended his appointment to 30 June 2008 so that he can continue his functions in accordance with paragraph 18 of Security Council resolution 1769 (2007).

To take forward his work, my Special Envoy will continue to be supported by the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), as stipulated by the Security Council in its resolution 1769 (2007), wherein the Council decided that UNAMID would support the mediation efforts of the Special Envoys of the African Union and the United Nations.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council and inform them of the continuing mandate of my Special Envoy.

(*Signed*) **Ban** Ki-moon

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United Nations S/2008/131

Security Council

Distr.: General
27 February 2008

Original: English

Letter dated 25 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I write to draw your attention to recent terrorist activity and violations carried out against Israel, as well as relevant developments in the region, in connection with the briefing on the Middle East, to be delivered by the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Robert H. Serry, before the Security Council on 26 February 2008.

At the outset, I wish to emphasize that these monthly letters reflect the very real, alarming and dangerous reality on the ground that Israel faces. Just this morning, a 10 year-old Israeli boy sustained serious injuries to his shoulder when a Qassam rocket fired by Palestinian terrorists in the northern Gaza Strip landed near his school in Sderot.

Terrorist attacks carried out against Israel and the situation in the Gaza Strip

On 4 February, two Palestinian terrorists carried out a suicide attack against Israeli civilians at a shopping centre in the southern town of Dimona. One Israeli civilian, a 73 year-old woman, was killed and 11 others were wounded, among them one critically and two moderately. The two terrorists were killed during the course of the attack.

Qassam rocket and mortar fire targeting western Negev towns and villages continued with alarming intensity and regularity throughout the month of February, causing heavy casualties, particularly among the civilian population in the city of Sderot. Since the Council's last discussion on the Middle East, more than 200 rockets and mortar shells have been fired at Israel by Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip. During January 2008, an average of 12 rockets and mortars were fired each day. If the rate of fire continues, by the end of 2008, over 4,500 rockets and mortars will have been fired by Palestinian terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip.

On 6 February, two girls, ages 2 and 11, were wounded by shrapnel after a Qassam rocket slammed into a playground adjacent to a kindergarten in Sderot.

On 8 and 9 February, a barrage of 40 rockets were fired at Negev towns and villages.

On 11 February, two Qassam rockets landed in the city centre of Sderot, injuring 8 year-old Osher Tuito and his 19 year-old brother, Rami. Doctors were

08-25356 (E) 030308

forced to amputate Osher's left leg during surgery. Eleven other civilians were treated for shock.

During the past week, from 19 to 21 February, Palestinian terrorists fired over 60 Qassam rockets and approximately 50 mortar shells at Israeli communities in the western Negev.

Data released by NATAL, the Israel Center for Victims of Terror and War, shows that 90 per cent of Sderot residents have experienced a Qassam rocket falling on their street or one adjacent to them. Some 28 per cent of adults and 30 per cent of children suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, with children exhibiting extremely high levels of fear, avoidance behaviour, school, behavioural and somatic problems, regression and sleep deprivation.

Hamas terrorists still hold Corporal Gilad Shalit captive. Since he was kidnapped on 25 June 2006, Hamas has refused to allow the Red Cross or any other humanitarian agency to visit him and verify his condition. The refusal to provide details regarding Gilad Shalit's condition is cause for great alarm.

As mentioned in previous letters, smuggling of weapons, money and other illegal munitions into the Gaza Strip present a grave danger. Hamas uses tunnels, burrowed deep beneath the ground, to move weapons into the Gaza Strip, turning the area into a launching pad for continued attacks and operations against Israel.

My Government has been clear — in words and in deeds — that it will do everything possible to ensure the humanitarian needs of all civilian populations. The flow of electricity to Gaza continues, and Israel works closely with the relevant United Nations and humanitarian agencies on the ground to ensure that the needs of the civilian population are met. The Nahal Oz Crossing remains open for the transfer of fuel and cooking gas, and the Erez Crossing is open for medical emergencies and humanitarian supplies.

Situation in the West Bank

Palestinian terrorism and violence also occurred in the West Bank, including an increase in stabbings, shootings and rock- and Molotov cocktail-throwing incidents.

On 12 February, an Israel Defense Forces soldier was stabbed in the neck by a terrorist. On 15 February, an Israeli woman was slightly injured and two vehicles were damaged when four Molotov cocktails were thrown at her by Palestinians. On 17 February, Palestinian terrorists opened fire on an Israeli bus travelling south of Nablus.

The Israel Defense Forces revealed that, last month, it had intercepted a truck destined for the West Bank carrying hazardous material intended for the assembling of explosive devices, including 800 kilograms of potassium nitrate.

Situation along the Blue Line

As my delegation has underscored in previous correspondence, the situation along the Blue Line remains precarious. From 16 January to 13 February, 53 violations of the Blue Line were recorded, totalling 808 such violations since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). A listing of these violations can be found in the annex to the present letter.

In addition, my delegation calls your attention to four specific areas of concern in connection to the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006):

1. **Arms embargo.** Weapons continue to be transferred through the Syrian-Lebanese border, in violation of the arms embargo. Indeed, the 20 October 2007 position paper submitted by the Lebanese Government to the Security Council implicates Syria in facilitating the transfer of weapons. This is an issue of great concern for international security.

2. **Rearming of Hizbullah.** Moreover, some of these weapons are destined for areas south of the Litani River, where a rearmed Hizbullah maintains a formidable presence. Hizbullah's rearming violates resolution 1701 (2006), and threatens the stability of the region.

3. **The two abducted Israeli soldiers.** Udi Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, kidnapped on 12 July 2006 by Hizbullah, remain held by their captors, without any sign of life given or visit by the Red Cross. Resolution 1701 (2006) is explicit in its call for the immediate and unconditional release of the Israeli soldiers, and my delegation calls upon the Council to implement these provisions, without delay.

4. **Demarcation of the Blue Line.** Israel hopes that marking the Blue Line, as well as placing warning signs, will be instrumental in preventing future incidents. The incident on 7 January 2008, in the Halta area, underscores the need and urgency of demarcating the Blue Line.

State support for terrorist organizations

My delegation has consistently urged for an end to all Palestinian violence and terrorism against Israel. Palestinian terrorism remains the greatest obstacle to peace and security in the region. The Palestinian leadership must stop the violence, dismantle the terrorist infrastructure, end the cycle of impunity and bring the terrorists to justice.

Furthermore, we have underscored that terrorist organizations in our region operate with the support and backing of States, namely Syria and Iran. A case in point is Iran's hosting of a representative of Hamas within its borders, in blatant violation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), which provides an overall framework for the obligation of States to refrain from supporting and funding terrorism. Syria too violates resolution 1373 (2001), as it serves as the headquarters for numerous terrorist organizations, including Hamas and Islamic Jihad, where Khaled Mashaal and Ramadan Abdullah, their respective leaders, both reside.

On 4 February, following the aforementioned terrorist attack in Dimona, Dr. Abu-Osama Abed Al-Ma'ati — a known Hamas terrorist leader who is hosted by the Iranian Government — threatened Israel with a new wave of suicide bombings. "We ceased to carry out these attacks for a year, but the enemy persisted with its aggression and the violations to the ceasefire. The Dimona attack is a message. That message is that Iz al-Din al-Qassam [sic] has renewed the suicide attacks."

The Security Council, of course, has already condemned terrorism against Israel in the strongest possible terms, as referred to in the Council's press statement of 28 February 2005 (SC/8325). Moreover, in resolution 1624 (2005), the Council condemned the incitement and attempts at the justification of terrorist attacks also in

the strongest terms. In this regard, resolution 1624 (2005) calls upon States to prevent such conduct and prohibit incitement by law. In issuing the aforementioned statement, Hamas — whose operational command comes from inside Iran and Syria — has pledged itself to continue to murder Israelis, undermine the hopes and aspirations of the Israeli and Palestinian people to reach a peaceful agreement, and violate the will of the international community.

In contrast, responsible States fulfil their obligations to protect their citizens, and Israel will continue to act in self-defence, in accordance with its inherent right under article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. Similarly, Israel carries out its counter-terrorist operations with respect to the applicable rules of international law, and in particular international humanitarian law.

Incitement and threats by Iran

Pursuant to my delegation's recent correspondence with the United Nations, I wish also to point to the number of highly alarming and sinister remarks made by senior members of the Iranian leadership, including its President, threatening the State of Israel, in the most offensive of terms.

On 20 February, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad told an audience in Tehran, "World Powers have created a black and dirty microbe named the Zionist regime, and have unleashed it like a savage animal on the nations of the region". It is wholly inexplicable and unjustifiable that the leadership of a State Member of the United Nations would threaten another Member State and liken it to a "dirty microbe". These threats blatantly violate the Charter, as well as article III (c) of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which is explicit in its demand for States to punish and prosecute those that carry out "direct and public incitement to commit genocide".

Israel calls upon the international community to condemn without reservation these outrageous anti-Israel, anti-Semitic and racist threats, which undoubtedly constitute direct and public incitement to commit genocide. Similarly, the international community should demand that States refrain from aiding and abetting terrorist organizations, and cease incitement to violence, provocations and support for terrorism.

Excellency, in closing, I wish to underscore that Israel remains committed to the bilateral process with the moderate Palestinian Authority leadership that embraces its responsibilities and the two-State vision. Despite the escalation of terrorist activity and rocket attacks, Israeli leaders have continued to meet with their moderate Palestinian counterparts and move forward on negotiations.

At the same time, support for the moderates means that the extremists must be isolated. Hamas, in rhetoric and in action, has shown it has no interest in the establishment of a State. It does not seek to win rights for the Palestinians. Rather, its sole platform is to deny the rights of others, namely through vicious terrorism and violence against Israel. Any support for Hamas, directly or indirectly, weakens the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue and jeopardizes the prospects of reaching an agreement. There is no future for the Palestinian people with Hamas, and Israel will continue to combat the terrorism that Hamas generates.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan **Gillerman**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex to the letter dated 25 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Blue Line violation report

Serial number of violation	Date and time of incident	Location of incident	Description of incident
752	2008/16/01 14:15	N468 (UTM 749774/687346)	One armed Lebanese civilian with three shepherds and medium sized flock of sheep were observed at the above mentioned UTM.
753	2008/07/01 14:00	N467 (UTM 748700/685750)	Three Lebanese civilians with a medium sized herd of sheep crossed the Blue Line approximately 200 meters into Israeli territory at the mentioned UTM.
754	01/17/2008 10:43	E435A (UTM 744581/68244)	One Lebanese civilian, Jafer Muhammed Abdu Mustafa from Arab el Louaize, crossed the Blue Line 180 meters into Israeli territory at the mentioned UTM. He was detained by IDF forces and questions on the spot. He was sent back across the Blue Line after coordination with UNIFIL forces.
755	2008/18/01 13:06	8-36 (UTM 735111/668058)	One armed Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.

756	01/18/2008 11:53	N467 (UTM 749008/686105)	One Lebanese civilian with a herd of sheep crossed the Blue Line 25 meters into Israeli territory at the above mentioned UTM.
757	2008/21/01 16:14	6-52 (UTM 731713/665475)	One armed Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
758	01/22/2008 11:45	8-34 (UTM 736420/674122)	One armed Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
760	2008/23/01 15:39	W425B (UTM 731734/665126)	One armed Lebanese civilians was observed firing his weapon into the air at the above mentioned UTM.
761	01/26/2008 12:15	N648 (UTM 750415/687257)	Two Lebanese civilians with a small sized herd of sheep crossed the Blue Line 60 meters into Israeli territory at the mentioned UTM
762	2008/26/01 15:37	W425 (UTM 730779/665128)	Two **armed** Lebanese civilians were observed at the above mentioned UTM.
763	2008/27/01 15:15	W418 (UTM 7185/6604)	A laser beam was pointed at an Israeli tank in the vicinity of IDF position W418, from the direction of Ayta Ash Sha'b.
765	2008/30/01 15:23	8-32 (UTM 736182/675033)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
766	2008/31/01 8:38	8-34 (UTM 736597/673763)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
767	2008/31/01 09:26	8-34 (UTM 736176/673970)	Two **armed** Lebanese civilians were observed at the above mentioned UTM.

768	2008/31/01 11:00	8-34 (UTM 736366/674145)	Three **armed** Lebanese civilians were observed at the above mentioned UTM.
769	2008/31/01 13:25	9-66 (UTM 740515/685894)	Two **armed** Lebanese civilians were observed firing their weapons into the air IVO the above mentioned UTM.
770	2008/31/01 15:30	8-32 (UTM 736182/675034)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
771	2008/01/02 07:00	9-15 (UTM 738698/684455)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
772	2008/01/02 12:06	E430 (UTM 732967/666547)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
773	2008/01/02 11:54	N468 (UTM 749458/686975)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
774	2008/01/02 12:05	N468 (UTM 749008/686875)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
775	02/01/2008 12:50	8-32 (UTM 735848/67529)	Two **armed** Lebanese civilians were observed at the above mentioned UTM.
776	2008/01/02 12:15	N468 (UTM 749248/686895)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
777	2008/01/02 15:10	9-15 (UTM 738868/684773)	One Lebanese civilian threw stones at the Technical Fence at the above mentioned UTM
778	2008/01/02 15:30	E430 (UTM 732510/665703)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.

779	2008/01/02 15:30	E430 (UTM 732510/665703)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
780	2008/09/02 16:50	W425 (UTM 731715/664840)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
781	2008/02/02 09:00	N468 (UTM 7479288/686835)	Two **armed** Lebanese civilians were observed at the above mentioned UTM.
782	2008/02/02 16:45	W407 (UTM 710575/664117)	A laser beam was pointed at an Israeli tank in the vicinity of IDF position W407 from the direction of northwest from within Lebanese territory.
783	02/03/2008 08:45	8-34 (UTM 735736/673858)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
784	2008/03/02 09:35	6-52 (UTM 729721/666423)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
785	2008/03/02 10:05	W425 (UTM 733230/667005)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
786	2008/03/02 12:13	N468 (UTM 749848/687725)	Two Lebanese shepherds, one armed, were observed at the above mentioned UTM.
787	2008/03/02 14:52	W425B (UTM 733414/665557)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
788	2008/03/02 15:22	W425 (UTM 731914/664986)	Two **armed** Lebanese civilians were observed at the above mentioned UTM.
789	2008/04/02 11:30	N468 (UTM 750388/689455)	One **armed** Lebanese Shepherd with a herd of sheep was observed at the above mentioned UTM.

790	2008/05/02 10:30	E430 (UTM 735551/667752)	One Lebanese civilian crossed the Blue Line 130 meters into Israeli territory at the mentioned UTM.
791	2008/05/02 10:30	E430 (UTM 735551/667752)	One Lebanese civilian crossed the Blue Line 130 meters into Israeli territory at the mentioned UTM.
792	2008/06/02 15:52	E434 (UTM 736425/672858)	Two **armed** Lebanese civilians crossed the Blue Line 100 meters into Israeli territory at the above mentioned UTM.
793	2008/05/02 15:00	W425A (UTM 729248/665376)	Three Lebanese civilians were observed at the above mentioned UTM. One of them was armed and shot twice into the air.
794	2008/06/02 10:40	E434 (UTM 736494/672491)	Three **armed** Lebanese civilians crossed the Blue Line 250 meters into Israeli territory at the above mentioned UTM.
795	2008/06/02 13:15	4-13 (UTM 749877/690074)	Four Lebanese civilians, three armed, were observed at the above mentioned UTM.
797	2008/07/02 12:03	N468 (UTM 749961/687569)	Two Lebanese shepherds, one armed, were observed with a herd of sheep at the above mentioned UTM.
798	2008/08/02 16:40	W425B (UTM 731339/664792)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
799	2008/09/02 10:20	E430 (UTM 7332724/666981)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
800	2008/09/02 16:50	W425 (UTM 731715/664840)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.

801	2007/10/02 12:45	9-15 (UTM 738168/683425)	One Lebanese civilian threw stones at an IDF vehicle at the above mentioned UTM.
802	2008/10/02 11:58	8-33 (UTM 735669/677586)	Three **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
803	2008/10/02 12:59	E-432 (UTM 735889/669232)	Two **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
804	02/10/2008 16:53	E432 (UTM 735118/667908)	Two **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed firing his weapon into the air at the above mentioned UTM.
805	2008/10/02 15:03	6-50 (UTM 723369/662102)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
807	2008/13/02 09:37	E432(UTM 723369/662102)	Three **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed at the above mentioned UTM.
808	2008/13/02 11:18	W416 (UTM 717082/663955)	One **armed** Lebanese civilians was observed shooting to the air at the above mentioned UTM.

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General Assembly
Sixty-second session
Agenda items 17 and 18

The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Identical letters dated 27 February 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

It is with grave concern that I write to inform you that Mr. Roni Yihye, a 47-year-old father of four, was murdered today after a Qassam rocket, fired by Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip, landed in a parking lot near Sapir College in southern Israel. No less than 22 Qassam rockets were fired during the day, striking in and around the town of Sderot. The latest barrage included 11 rockets, which were launched successively in a span of less than five minutes. The Hamas terrorist organization claimed responsibility.

Today's Qassam rocket fire came just days after Palestinian terrorists injured 10-year-old Yossi Haimov, this past Monday, on 25 February, in Sderot. Yossi and his 8-year-old sister, Maria, were playing outside a friend's house when a Qassam rocket slammed into the backyard.

The fact that my delegation is forced to write and inform you of these Palestinian terrorist attacks with alarming regularity should not be mistaken for routine procedure. There is nothing mundane about Palestinian terrorism; it is a deadly force with devastating real-world consequences. Palestinian terrorism can never be justified or explained, especially amidst calls for equivalence and parity, as we recently heard. The security threats that Israel faces arise from a situation where armed terrorists like Hamas and other Palestinian terrorist organizations intentionally target Israeli civilians. Hence, the State of Israel is obligated and will continue to defend its citizens, in accordance with its inherent right, like any other nation, under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. Hamas's firing of rockets at Israeli civilians from within populated Palestinian areas is a war crime that harms both Israelis and Palestinians. While Israel takes the necessary measures to protect all civilian populations and ensure their humanitarian needs, Hamas takes the necessary measures to cause the utmost death and destruction. Moreover, Palestinian

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terrorists, like Hamas, are backed with the full support of some States, in violation of international law.

The unremitting and indiscriminate Qassam rocket fire has levied an insufferable toll on the civilian population of southern Israel, triggering a severe humanitarian situation there. The safety, security and stability of all citizens in our region will remain in peril so long as Palestinian terrorism continues unabated. Hence the Palestinian leadership must stop the violence, dismantle the terrorist infrastructure, end the cycle of impunity and bring the terrorists to justice.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 17 and 18, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Daniel **Carmon**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

United Nations A/62/711–S/2008/133

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Security Council

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General Assembly
Sixty-second session
Agenda item 108
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Letter dated 27 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I would like to bring to your attention a recent judgement by a Belgian court against several members of the terrorist organization, the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front (DHKP-C). Among the accused are Dursun Karataş, the leader of DHKP-C, and the notorious terrorist Fehriye Erdal, one of the perpetrators of the assassination carried out in Istanbul in 1996 against Özdemir Sabancı, a prominent Turkish businessman, and his two assistants. I wish to emphasize that DHKP-C is on the list of terrorist organizations of the European Union and has perpetrated numerous violent terrorist acts in Turkey and several in several other European countries, targeting not only the constitutional order of Turkey, but also the existence and activities of the international organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

On 7 February 2008 the Antwerp Court of Appeals, overruling the previous judgements of other Belgian courts, namely Brugges Penal Court and the Gand Court of Appeals, acquitted the DHKP-C members, including the above-mentioned two terrorists, for the charges of "being member of a terrorist organization or criminal gang" in the light of the evidence provided by the Federal Prosecutor of Belgium. The Antwerp Court of Appeals convicted three of the accused, including Fehriye Erdal, only for the crimes of forgery and illegal possession of firearms, but then deferred their sentences.

The verdict of the Antwerp Court of Appeal is being examined by the Turkish authorities in detail and the possibility of appeal is being explored. We also noted that the Federal Prosecutor of Belgium appealed the said decision.

However, we are still concerned with the following conclusions of the Court upon which the verdict was based:

> "... The Court does not need to examine if DHKP-C abroad — e.g., in Turkey, Germany, Holland or Italy — can or should be considered as an association of criminals, respectively a criminal organization or a terrorist association ..."

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"... The Court is in no way bound by a decision of a foreign penal court, nor by a foreign administrative decision, nor by a foreign decision by an executive power ..."

"... Nor can the incorporation by the European Union of DHKP-C in the list of terrorist groups be binding for the judgement by the Court ..."

"... At the most, the incorporation in the list of terrorist associations can have the value of an indication that, together with other elements, could be taken into consideration ..."

"... For what concerns the 'foreign' elements: one can only take them into account for as far as there is a demonstrable link with the defendants and their activities in Belgium ..."

Though we have full respect for the independence of the judiciary, we firmly believe that these conclusions, without any doubt, constitute a serious contradiction to the fundamental principles of the global fight against terrorism. Moreover, the judgement is not in line with the binding resolutions of the Security Council, such as resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1566 (2004), which stipulate punishment of the perpetrators of terrorist acts by penalties consistent with their grave nature. Furthermore, it should also be noted that decisions as such could be misinterpreted as impunity and would consequently embolden the terrorist organizations.

I would like to conclude by quoting from your statement to the General Assembly on 16 February 2007 on the follow-up to the adoption of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy: "The fight against terrorism is our common mission". As you would agree with me, the accomplishment of this important mission requires firm and consistent stance by each and every member of the international community, as well as full and consistent implementation of the binding obligations incumbent upon member States.

I would be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 108, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Baki **İlkin**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations S/2008/134

Security Council

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Report of the Secretary-General concerning the credentials of the alternate representatives of Panama on the Security Council

Pursuant to rule 15 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the Secretary-General wishes to report that he has received a note verbale dated 19 February 2008 from the Permanent Mission of Panama to the United Nations stating that Angélica Jácome and Andrés de Vengoechea have been appointed alternate representatives of Panama on the Council.

In the opinion of the Secretary-General, that communication constitutes adequate provisional credentials.

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Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006)

I. Introduction

1. The present report is the sixth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). It provides a comprehensive assessment of the steps taken to implement resolution 1701 (2006) since the last report of the Secretary-General was issued on 30 October 2007 (S/2007/641), and highlights both continuing progress on the implementation of this resolution and areas of concern that continue to impede the establishment of a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution between the parties.

2. I am pleased to report that both the Governments of Lebanon and Israel express continued commitment to the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006). Only the enduring commitment of the parties to all the provisions of the resolution, without selectivity, will create the required basis for a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the Lebanese Armed Forces have continued their work to ensure that the area between the Blue Line and the Litani River is not utilized for hostile activities and that it is free of any unauthorized armed personnel, assets and weapons. The cooperation between UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces has increased during the reporting period, as manifested by the augmentation of coordinated operations in fulfilment of relevant provisions of resolution 1701 (2006). This cooperation has contributed significantly to the general calm that continues to prevail in the UNIFIL area of operations. However, I am concerned by a number of serious incidents that occurred place during the reporting period and have raised the level of tension in the area.

3. During the reporting period, Lebanon remained in the grip of an intense political crisis, which has impeded the normal functioning of the legitimate constitutional institutions. At the centre of the crisis is the election of a new President, a position that has remained vacant since 24 November 2007. The prolonged political deadlock has generated violent confrontations between the opposing parties that has led to a number of fatalities and injuries. Efforts to reach an agreement by Lebanese and international parties are ongoing. However, owing to regional interests intermingled with Lebanese internal dynamics, these efforts have yet to bear fruit.

4. The continuation of targeted assassinations in Lebanon has added to tensions throughout the country. The scope of targets has widened to include UNIFIL outside

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of its area of operations, the army, the security forces and the diplomatic community. On 12 December 2007, an explosion killed General Francois el-Hajj of the Lebanese Armed Forces along with his driver. On 25 January 2008, Major Wissam Eid, of the Internal Security Forces, was killed along with five others and 20 people were injured. On 15 January 2008, an explosion apparently targeted a vehicle of the Embassy of the United States of America in Lebanon, leaving three people dead and wounding dozens. These terrorist attacks pose a serious threat to the security and stability of Lebanon and threaten its very sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence.

5. As indicated above, the situation prevailing in Lebanon during the reporting period has greatly complicated efforts to achieve further progress on key aspects of resolution 1701 (2006).

II. Implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006)

A. Respect for the Blue Line

6. The military and security situation in the UNIFIL area of operations has been generally stable since the submission of my last report on 30 October 2007 (S/2007/641). The parties continue to pledge their commitment to upholding the cessation of hostilities. Nevertheless, there were a number of serious incidents during the reporting period, which have raised tension in the area of operations, particularly at some known points of friction along the Blue Line. These incidents constitute violations of resolution 1701 (2006) and undermine UNIFIL efforts to build trust and confidence between the parties and with the population of southern Lebanon.

7. On 8 January 2008, the Israel Defense Forces informed UNIFIL that two rockets had hit the northern Israeli town of Shelomi, causing minor damage to the main road and a house, but no injuries. The Israel Defense Forces, the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL did not detect the firing or the impact of rockets and there was no explosion on impact. Despite multiple joint searches by UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces, no trace of a launching site has been discovered. To date, no one has claimed responsibility for the attack. The Israel Defense Forces insisted that the rockets were launched from Lebanese territory across the Blue Line. The Lebanese Armed Forces maintained that no rockets were launched from Lebanese territory. UNIFIL, in close cooperation with the Israel Defense Forces and the Lebanese Armed Forces, has been investigating the incident and efforts to ascertain all the facts are ongoing. A preliminary investigation report was provided to the parties on 11 January 2008. If the rockets were launched from Lebanese territory, as is likely, the incident would constitute a serious violation of resolution 1701 (2006) and a breach of the cessation of hostilities agreement.

8. The investigation of the Lebanese Armed Forces into the 17 June 2007 rocket attack against Israel (see S/2007/392) is still ongoing. At this point, there are no new developments to report. I urge the Lebanese authorities to do their utmost to identify the perpetrators and bring them to justice.

9. On two separate occasions, on 9 November 2007 and 3 February 2008, Lebanese civilians were involved in criminal operations to smuggle illegal

substances and commercial goods from Lebanon into Israel. Both incidents occurred in the area of the village of Ghajar. On 9 November 2007, two individuals were detected by the Israel Defense Forces after they crossed the Blue Line. The Israel Defense Forces opened fire, wounded and subsequently arrested both individuals south of the Blue Line. They remain in the custody of the Israeli authorities. In addition, another suspect remains in the custody of the Lebanese Armed Forces, along with a possible accomplice. UNIFIL completed its investigation into the incident and submitted its findings and conclusions to the parties.

10. On 3 February 2008, an IDF patrol opened fire and wounded two Lebanese civilians who were suspected of conducting smuggling activities and had entered the area occupied by Israel around Ghajar village, north of the Blue Line. One of the individuals subsequently died and UNIFIL has been informed that the injured individual is in the custody of the Lebanese Armed Forces. The UNIFIL investigation to ascertain the facts is ongoing. This incident underlines the urgent requirement to complete the full withdrawal of the Israel Defense Forces from the northern part of the village of Ghajar and the surrounding area, in accordance with resolution 1701 (2006).

11. These two incidents around Ghajar reinforce the vital importance of the liaison and coordination arrangements agreed between UNIFIL and the two parties, and highlight, in particular, the importance of a quick exchange of information in preventing illegal activities, such as smuggling operations, on both sides of the Blue Line before such situations can escalate.

12. During the reporting period, there were three different instances of Israel Defense Forces soldiers pointing their weapons in the direction of UNIFIL patrols, with the Israeli soldiers also pointing infrared lasers in one of the instances. UNIFIL is continuing its investigation into an incident that occurred on 13 February 2008, when small arms fire from the Israeli side hit a minefield warning sign in the vicinity of a United Nations mine clearance team operating close to the Blue Line. The Israel Defense Forces informed UNIFIL that it was conducting its own investigation to ascertain the origins of the small arms fire and the circumstances of the incident. On 24 February 2008, a UNIFIL vehicle patrol was blocked by a group of Lebanese civilians for a few hours in the area of operations. I wish to reiterate the obligations of the parties to ensure the safety, security and freedom of movement of UNIFIL and to extend their full cooperation to the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006).

13. On two occasions, on 7 January 2008, in the Shab'a Farms area, and on 18 January 2008, in the vicinity of Ghajar, respectively, the Israel Defense Forces apprehended a Lebanese shepherd for crossing the Blue Line. On the first occasion, after some hours, the shepherd was released through UNIFIL, which subsequently handed him over to the Lebanese authorities. On the basis of the shepherd's statement, the Lebanese Armed Forces later reported to UNIFIL that he had been apprehended by the Israel Defense Forces north of the Blue Line. The Lebanese Armed Forces requested UNIFIL to investigate the incident. However, in the light of the contradictory testimonies received from the parties and the lack of other evidence, UNIFIL has not been able to ascertain the exact location of the incident. On the second occasion, the UNIFIL investigation confirmed that a shepherd had crossed the Blue Line.

14. With regard to all incidents, I urge the parties to cooperate fully with UNIFIL investigations and provide all pertinent information and evidence in a timely manner so that the facts can be quickly established. This will help to reduce tension on the ground and prevent similar incidents in the future.

15. UNIFIL also reported a number of additional minor ground violations by local Lebanese shepherds. As I noted in my last report, such violations, which in some cases may be inadvertent, can lead to accidental incidents and unintended escalation of tension along the Blue Line.

16. I have previously underlined the importance of visibly marking the Blue Line in order to reduce inadvertent violations on the ground and build confidence. I also reported that UNIFIL had initiated a pilot project with the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defense Forces to visibly mark a six-kilometre stretch of the Blue Line in the western sector of the area of operations. Two Blue Line barrels are now installed and eight more points have been agreed upon with the parties. It is important to build on this momentum. I urge the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defense Forces to remain focused on a practical constructive approach in order to overcome any obstacles to visibly mark the Blue Line, as identified in 2000 by the United Nations. The lessons drawn from the pilot project will eventually assist in finalizing the working paper on the technical procedures for marking the entire Blue Line.

17. Throughout the reporting period, UNIFIL has observed and reported a significant number of Israeli air violations of Lebanese airspace by aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicles on an almost daily basis. A particularly high number of air violations were reported on 7 and 11 February 2008, involving large numbers of fighter aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicles, over Lebanese territory and its territorial waters. Some of the aircraft were flying at low altitude, including over UNIFIL headquarters in Naqoura. In addition, some of the fighter aircraft were flying in tactical formation, performing dogfights and other training manoeuvres, and, on two occasions, employing electronic countermeasures. On 17 February 2008, UNIFIL recorded 36 air violations, mainly by unmanned aerial vehicles. All Israeli overflights of Lebanese territory constitute violations of Lebanese sovereignty and of resolution 1701 (2006). Additionally, air violations inherently escalate tensions and significantly increase the possibility of security incidents, as demonstrated on 1 November 2007 and 21 January 2008, when the Lebanese Armed Forces opened fire on Israeli aircraft violating Lebanese airspace. Air violations can cause unnecessary apprehension among the local population, particularly when conducted at low altitude and in a provocative manner. Moreover, they impede the ability of UNIFIL to work effectively towards further stabilization of the situation by undermining the credibility of the United Nations and the Lebanese authorities.

18. I have continued to voice concern and call on Israel to cease all air violations. My representatives on the ground have done the same. The Government of Lebanon continues to protest these acts as serious violations of Lebanese sovereignty and of resolution 1701 (2006). The Government of Israel maintains that overflights are a necessary security measure that will continue until its two abducted soldiers are released and the measures set out in paragraphs 14 and 15 of resolution 1701 (2006) are implemented in full.

B. Security and liaison arrangements

19. The regular tripartite meetings held by the UNIFIL Force Commander with senior representatives of the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defense Forces remain a crucial mechanism to build confidence between the parties. The two sides continue to demonstrate a strong commitment to this forum, which aims to address key security and military operational issues, prevent incidents and violations, and enhance liaison and coordination. The tripartite mechanism is addressing an increasing number of issues, including the findings and conclusions of UNIFIL investigations into incidents. As I stressed in my last report, the range and complexity of the issues makes progress in formulating common understanding at times incremental and slow.

20. Despite intensive efforts, the impasse over the temporary security arrangements for the northern part of the village of Ghajar has not been overcome to date. Continuing control by the Israel Defense Forces of the part of the village north of the Blue Line and a small adjacent area inside Lebanese territory is a source of tension and carries the potential for incidents. The Israel Defense Forces does not maintain permanent positions inside this area, but it has increased its presence and activities over the reporting period. As I stated in previous reports, as long as the Israel Defense Forces remains in northern Ghajar, Israel will not have completed its withdrawal from southern Lebanon, in accordance with its obligations under resolution 1701 (2006). Following extensive bilateral consultations, the UNIFIL Force Commander has presented to the parties new ideas on how to overcome the impasse and facilitate the Israel Defense Forces withdrawal from the area. I urge the parties to take a constructive approach so that this critical and sensitive issue can be resolved as soon as possible. I have noted the latest proposal of the Government of Lebanon in this regard.

21. The area of operations is effectively controlled by the combined presence of UNIFIL and Lebanese Armed Forces troops. UNIFIL maintains 61 permanent positions, 136 observation posts and six temporary checkpoints and observation posts. In addition, UNIFIL continues to conduct an average of 400 vehicle, foot and air patrols, day and night, in any 24-hour period throughout its area of operations in both rural and urban areas. The Lebanese Armed Forces remains deployed in the area of operations with four brigades of different sizes, currently operates more than 100 checkpoints and observation posts, and patrols critical locations in the area south of the Litani River. In maintaining this significant commitment of resources, the Lebanese Armed Forces contributes to improving peace and stability in southern Lebanon, despite being overstretched as a result of additional responsibilities that include manning the border areas and providing security in main Lebanese urban centres, particularly Beirut. On occasion, the Lebanese Armed Forces has had to temporarily redeploy some troops from the UNIFIL area of operations to address such specific security requirements, but this has not had a significant impact on the level of its operations.

22. Coordination and liaison between UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces further strengthened during the reporting period, to ensure that the area between the Blue Line and the Litani River is free of unauthorized armed personnel, assets and weapons. Since my last report, coordinated operations have increased, both in number and complexity, resulting in enhanced monitoring and control over the UNIFIL area of operations. On a daily basis, UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed

Forces conduct six coordinated vehicle and three foot patrols, in addition to operating one co-located checkpoint in varying parts of the area of operations. UNIFIL also continued to operate co-located checkpoints with the Lebanese Armed Forces at two crucial entry points into the area of operations on the Litani River, as stated in my last report. At that time, the co-located checkpoints were not operating continuously; however, the one in the eastern sector is now operating on a permanent basis, and the one in the western sector at Qassmiyeh bridge on the coastal road will also soon be operating continuously.

23. Following the rocket incident of 8 January 2008, UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces further intensified their operations to ensure that the area south of the Litani River is not utilized for hostile activities of any kind, by introducing four daily counter-rocket launching operations. These operations comprise coordinated vehicle and foot patrols, temporary observation posts and checkpoints in areas from which rockets could be launched. The operations also include checks of vehicles and people moving in the area, especially during the night hours.

24. Coordinated operations undertaken by UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces during the reporting period resulted in 96 findings of abandoned arms, ammunition and explosive devices. The discoveries included two rocket launchers, 14 120-mm rockets, 76 mortar bombs, seven improvised explosive devices camouflaged as rocks, seven 155-mm shells in a courtyard, in addition to 21 caves or bunkers. There were no signs that the installations had been recently used. The Lebanese Armed Forces continues to destroy or confiscate all arms and ammunition found south of the Litani River.

25. UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces are seeking to ensure that the area south of the Litani River is free of unauthorized armed personnel, assets and weapons, in accordance with resolution 1701 (2006). Recently, an increasing number of armed civilians — hunters and shepherds — have been reported in the area of operations close to the Blue Line.

26. Israel maintains that Hizbullah is significantly rebuilding its military presence and capacity, inside the UNIFIL area of operations. At times, the Israel Defense Forces has provided UNIFIL with information about locations in the UNIFIL area of operations, in which it claims that these activities are taking place. UNIFIL, in collaboration with the Lebanese Armed Forces, immediately investigates all such claims if sufficiently specific information is received. To date, it has found no evidence of new military infrastructure in the area of operations. Israel also claims that Hizbullah has adapted its modus operandi in order to conceal its activities from UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces, and has relocated its operations mainly to urban areas. UNIFIL has observed that its operational activities are on occasion being closely monitored by unarmed civilians. However, UNIFIL constantly changes its patrolling patterns to maintain the highest level of effectiveness.

27. As I stated in my previous report, ensuring that the area south of the Litani River is free of unauthorized armed personnel, assets and weapons is a long-term endeavour. The rocket firing incidents and attacks against UNIFIL, as reported above and in previous reports (S/2007/392 and S/2007/641), indicate that there are still hostile elements and unauthorized arms, including in the area of operations, which undermine joint efforts to implement resolution 1701 (2006) and constitute a direct threat to peace and security. It is therefore necessary for UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces to further intensify their coordinated efforts, including

through increased controls on the Litani River, to counter any movement of weapons and prevent hostile activities in the area of operations.

28. However, a number of competing requirements on the Lebanese Armed Forces, including in connection with internal security in other parts of the country, combined with limited resources, have placed the Lebanese Armed Forces under increasing strain. I am concerned that this situation may have an effect on the pace of operations of the Lebanese Armed Forces in southern Lebanon in the longer term and, as a consequence, pose new challenges for UNIFIL and the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006).

29. I reiterate that the support of the international community is necessary to assist the Lebanese Armed Forces in becoming an adequately equipped and capable force to eventually assume effective security responsibility over the current area of operations of UNIFIL. The Army remains a key actor for the long-term sustainability of the arrangements foreseen in resolution 1701 (2006). Even though the operational capacity of the Lebanese Armed Forces continues to be enhanced through joint training exercises and coordinated activities with UNIFIL, the pressing need for greater international support in equipment and materiel remains. I am grateful to those Member States that have provided assistance to the Lebanese Armed Forces, mainly in the form of military vehicles. Further assistance is needed in connection with the provision of critically needed equipment and materiel to increase the logistical and operational capability of the Lebanese Armed Forces.

30. The UNIFIL Maritime Task Force continued to perform maritime interdiction operations along the Lebanese coast to prevent the entry into Lebanon of unauthorized arms and related materiel. Since the Task Force assumed its mission in mid-October 2006, more than 12,500 ships have been hailed and queried, with close to 70 vessels being identified as suspicious, which subsequently were inspected and cleared by Lebanese naval or customs officials. On 29 January 2008, in response to a distress signal from a Lebanese vessel about 80 kilometres south of Beirut port, the Task Force launched a search and rescue operation, with the assistance of a French naval ship present in the area. All crew members were rescued. Cooperation between the Task Force and the Lebanese navy has further increased and reached a higher degree of effectiveness. Lebanese naval liaison officers continue to be on board the ship commanding the maritime interdiction operations, as well as at UNIFIL headquarters.

31. UNIFIL and Lebanese Armed Forces maritime forces have continued their joint training programme during the reporting period. Maritime training has progressed on both operational and tactical requirements, with the focus being on integrating the Coastal Radar Organization and the capability of the Lebanese navy. Installation of the Coastal Radar Organization and related communications equipment is nearly complete and, following conclusion of necessary training, the Naval Operations Centre in Beirut will be able to maintain a complete and uninterrupted recognized maritime picture of the Lebanese territorial waters. While the improved capabilities of the Lebanese navy will gradually enable it to assume some responsibilities and tasks presently performed by the Maritime Task Force, continued material and technical support will remain critical over the medium to long term.

32. Overall coordination with the Israel Defense Forces has been good, and UNIFIL maintains a liaison office with two officers at the Israel Defense Forces

Northern Command headquarters in Zefat. I am pleased to report that progress has been made towards the establishment of a UNIFIL office in Tel Aviv, which should be operational within the coming period.

33. The attitude of the local population in southern Lebanon remained generally positive towards UNIFIL throughout the reporting period. UNIFIL continues to maintain close relations with local communities, and provides humanitarian assistance, including medical and dental services, veterinary assistance, limited engineering support and unexploded ordnance identification and disposal. The Force has designed a community outreach strategy to ensure that its mandate is clearly understood by the local population, and to best respond to its concerns. As part of this effort, military and civilian personnel maintain regular contacts with the local authorities and community leaders, and utilize the Mission's public information products such as television spots, documentaries, photographic exhibitions and a bimonthly magazine in this regard. In addition, the UNIFIL civil-military cooperation and civil affairs components implement quick-impact projects for the benefit of local communities, funded from the Mission's budget, as well as by troop-contributing countries. Such projects remain essential for UNIFIL to build confidence and support with the local population. Good relations with the local population are critical, if UNIFIL is to successfully implement resolution 1701 (2006).

C. Disarming armed groups

34. According to the Government of Israel, Hizbullah has continued to construct new facilities and carry out training north of the Litani River and in the Bekaa valley, where the Government of Lebanon has exclusive responsibility for security. Hizbullah has not challenged allegations regarding the development of military facilities north of the Litani River and has publicly announced that it will use its arsenal against Israel if provoked.

35. The Government of Israel claims that Hizbullah has adapted its weaponry and tactics so as to take into account the UNIFIL presence south of the Litani River, and maintains that the location of Hizbullah facilities puts its military force within range to fire rockets at Israel. In addition to information provided in previous reports, the Government of Israel states that Hizbullah's arsenal includes some 10,000 long-range rockets, in addition to some 20,000 short-range rockets, deployed both north and south of the Litani River. Hizbullah has denied allegations regarding the transfer of weapons into the area south of the Litani River and states that it continues to respect the requirements of resolution 1701 (2006) in this regard.

36. There is great concern because of reports that Hizbullah is rearming, which would pose serious challenges to the sovereignty, stability and independence of Lebanon and the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006).

37. In my previous report, I highlighted the threat to the stability and sovereignty of Lebanon posed by non-Lebanese armed groups. I will report to the Council on this in more detail in my next report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004).

38. Mindful of the provision of paragraph 10 of resolution 1701 (2006) regarding disarmament, I continue to believe that the disarmament of Hizbullah and other

militias should take place through a Lebanese-led political process that will bring full restoration of the authority of the Government of Lebanon over all its territory so that there will be no weapons without the consent of the Government of Lebanon and no authority other than that of the Government of Lebanon. While the disarmament of armed groups remains a central issue of the political debate in Lebanon, I regret to note that the persistent deterioration of the political climate and the prolonged deadlock have not been conducive to addressing the issue meaningfully at the national level.

D. Arms embargo

39. In my last report to the Council on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), I drew attention to alleged breaches of the arms embargo across the border between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic and the claimed transfer of sophisticated weaponry from the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Syrian Arab Republic across this border. In its letter dated 10 December 2007 (S/2007/724), the Syrian Arab Republic countered those claims and maintained that allegations of weapons smuggling across the Syrian-Lebanese border were motivated by political rather than security considerations. However, Hizbullah, by admission of its leaders on several occasions, has replenished its military capacity since the 2006 war with Israel. I therefore remain concerned that this border remains vulnerable to such breaches, which would represent serious violations of the resolution and constitute a significant threat to the stability and security of Lebanon.

40. The Lebanese Armed Forces continues its deployment along, and monitoring of, this border in order to prevent such breaches. This presence has, however, been somewhat reduced owing to the increased operational demands placed on the Lebanese Armed Forces to address various security challenges in other parts of the country. However, this has been partially offset by the deployment of additional troops from the Internal Security Forces.

41. Also of continuing concern are the heavily armed military positions maintained by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and Fatah al-Intifada along the same border. Their existence poses a direct and continuing challenge to the sovereignty of the Lebanese State inasmuch as it affords both groups de facto control of a stretch of the Lebanese border with the Syrian Arab Republic. The Lebanese Armed Forces continues to maintain a defensive line around both of these military camps.

42. The Government of Lebanon has maintained efforts to enhance its capacity to secure the borders of the country. In my last report to the Council, I noted the initial progress achieved by the Government of Lebanon, with assistance from the international community, towards implementing some of the recommendations of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team. I am pleased to note that since my last report, there has been some progress towards meeting some of the key recommendations of the Assessment Team through the ongoing process of strengthening Lebanon's border management capacity in the context of the German-led pilot project in northern Lebanon.

43. The Lebanese Common Border Force, which has brought together the four main Lebanese security agencies for the purposes of the pilot project, began ground operations in the period between December 2007 and January 2008. The area of

operations of the force is approximately 130 kilometres along the northern border of Lebanon with the Syrian Arab Republic and has a depth of approximately 20 kilometres into Lebanese territory. The force, headed by a general from the Lebanese Armed Forces, is comprised of three teams, each responsible for a specific sector of the area of operations. Each team is comprised of approximately 130 Lebanese army soldiers, 50 members of the Internal Security Forces, 10 staff from General Security and 10 from the customs authorities. These teams patrol the area of responsibility through mobile patrols and a number of fixed observation points. Ground operations are coordinated from the recently established common operations room situated in the Tripoli headquarters of the Lebanese army command for northern Lebanon. While the force has come across incidents of smuggling, these cases have been minor and only concern the smuggling of diesel fuel and other non-lethal material. To date, the force has not discovered any case of smuggling of weapons in its area of operations.

44. The Lebanese authorities have also taken the first steps towards relocating the key northern border crossing point of Aboudieh from its current position of one kilometre south of the borderline to a location along the Nahr al-Kabir river, which denotes the border itself. This measure will reduce the possibilities for diversionary routes and illicit cross-border activity. I am also pleased to note the significant efforts of the customs authorities to further update and enhance the computerization of their tracking and control mechanisms with support from the international community.

45. Throughout the reporting period, international donors have continued to make available technical expertise and equipment as part of a process to build Lebanon's capacity in the area of border management. A key aspect of strengthening such capacity has been the extensive and ongoing training programme that is being made available to all members of the approximately 800-strong Lebanese Common Border Force.

46. Notwithstanding these initial accomplishments, efforts by Lebanon to improve border security are in their early stages, and much remains to be done. Although the Common Border Force has begun ground operations, further development of its command and control, mobility, communications and operating procedures is required. Consequently, the force has yet to achieve its full operational capacity. A key challenge in this regard will be to ensure the continued integration of the four security agencies that comprise the force. Accordingly, continued efforts will be required by the Lebanese authorities to ensure a greater degree of procedural and operational standardization within the context of the pilot project. The installation and rehabilitation of certain physical infrastructure is also ongoing, and will be required to support the full operation of a number of the force's observation and gathering points throughout its area of responsibility. Also of key importance is the urgent delivery of the remaining necessary technical and telecommunications equipment to the Lebanese authorities that will serve to enhance further the operation capacity and effectiveness of the force. I believe it is now time to capitalize and expand on the important initial accomplishments of the project and to further enhance the capacity of the Common Border Force.

47. Despite progress on certain aspects of enhancing border management, I am concerned that the continuing political crisis and the deteriorating security situation have also presented additional demands on the security forces and challenges to this

endeavour. Key aspects of the recommendations of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team, which are essential to enhancing security arrangements along the border, remain to be implemented. In accordance with the request of the Security Council contained in its presidential statement of 3 August 2007 (S/PRST/2007/19), and with a view to thoroughly assessing the implementation of the recommendations of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team and updating the Council, during the next reporting period I intend to dispatch a team to Lebanon to carry out an assessment. The visit will be arranged in coordination with the Government of Lebanon.

48. Another important aspect to be considered in the context of developing a border security regime is the need to accelerate the pace of socio-economic development in Lebanese border regions, in order to provide the communities of these areas with a viable economic alternative to smuggling and illicit cross-border trade. I call on the international community to support the efforts of the Government of Lebanon to extend and enhance such development activity.

49. The Syrian Arab Republic has reiterated that it has doubled the number of border guards on its side of the border, as I first noted in my report dated 14 March 2007 (S/2007/147). The Syrian Arab Republic has also noted that it has requested technical equipment to assist with the monitoring of its borders and training for Syrian personnel, but it has yet to receive a definitive response in this regard. Furthermore, the Syrian Arab Republic has provided information about 17 meetings between Syrian and Lebanese officials held during the period 6 December 2005 to 29 August 2007, whereby practical issues related to smuggling, customs and access of farmers to lands on either side of the border have been discussed. However, for the reasons indicated in paragraph 39 above, I reiterate my call on the Syrian Arab Republic to extend its support and cooperation to a bilateral process with the Government of Lebanon to manage their common border, an objective that is of mutual benefit for both countries.

E. Landmines and cluster bombs

50. Since the end of the 2006 conflict, the United Nations Mine Action Coordination Centre-South Lebanon has coordinated the clearance and reduction of 33 million square metres of contaminated land, comprising 44 per cent of the surface and 25 per cent of the sub-surface areas, through a joint effort including the Lebanese Armed Forces, UNIFIL, the United Nations and bilaterally funded clearance organizations. In total, 140,362 cluster munitions have been located and destroyed. When operational planning began after the war, the size of the problem was estimated at some 32 million square metres, which has now increased to 38.7 million square metres to date. During the reporting period, the Mine Action Coordination Centre identified 12 additional cluster bomb strike locations, bringing the total to 963 locations recorded thus far.

51. Unexploded ordnance, particularly cluster munitions, continues to maim and kill civilians in southern Lebanon, with an average of two civilian casualties per month. Since the end of the 2006 conflict to date, unexploded ordnance and cluster munitions combined have led to 27 civilian fatalities and 209 civilian injuries, as well as 14 mine clearance fatalities (including one UNIFIL peacekeeper) and 34 mine clearance injuries.

F. Abducted soldiers and prisoners

52. I regret to report that there has been no progress on the humanitarian aspects of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), specifically the issues of the abducted Israeli soldiers and Lebanese prisoners. Hizbullah continues to refuse to provide any information on the release or fate of the abducted soldiers, Udi Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, and places conditions and demands for their release that are far outside of the scope of resolution 1701 (2006).

53. Increased rhetoric during the past months and recent events have not been conducive to reaching a breakthrough in the negotiations. Public remarks by the Secretary-General of Hizbullah regarding the remains of Israeli soldiers in Lebanon from the 2006 war have equally not contributed to the desired humanitarian solution.

G. Delineation of borders

54. In pursuance of the implementation of paragraph 10 of resolution 1701 (2006) on border delineation between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, I have continued to call on Governments of both countries to reach an agreement on their common border. The Government of Lebanon has continued to express its readiness to move forward with the delineation of the border. The Government of Syria affirms that the demarcation of borders is a bilateral sovereign matter that should be resolved between the Syrian and Lebanese Governments. In its letter dated 10 December 2007 (S/2007/724), the Syrian Arab Republic restated its readiness "to begin demarcating the Syrian-Lebanese border, starting from the north for practical reasons, namely, that the southern part of this common border is under Israeli occupation". I urge both Governments to take practical steps without delay towards achieving this goal in accordance with resolutions 1701 (2006) and 1680 (2006).

55. The reactivation of the Lebanese-Syrian border committee, as suggested by President Assad at my meeting with him on 24 April 2007, would be a step in the right direction. Syrian official assertions regarding meetings of Syrian and Lebanese border control officials and information it has provided on 17 meetings to date are not a substitute for activating the Lebanese-Syrian border committee, since those meetings did not address issues of border determination but, rather, smuggling and customs-related issues. I again call on the Governments of the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon to take steps urgently, in keeping with international law, to reach an agreement on their common border.

56. In my previous report on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), I provided a provisional definition of the Shab'a Farms area based on the best available information. The Syrian Arab Republic has yet to respond to my specific request for documents, as outlined in my letter of 3 October 2007, which would assist the precise plotting of the geographic coordinates of the relevant line. In addition, there has been no official reaction on the provisional definition of the cartographer by the Governments of Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Israel. I encourage them to submit such reactions to the Secretariat.

57. In the same report I indicated that I intended to consult with all the relevant parties and members of the Security Council on further developments. I also expressed my intention to follow up directly with the Government of the Syrian

Arab Republic on the communication dated 9 August 2007 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain. I have carried out such consultations, but am unable to report any progress. While the Government of Lebanon stands fast on its proposal contained in its seven-point plan of August 2006, the Government of Israel maintains that the Shab'a Farms issue is one that should be addressed between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. The Syrian Arab Republic continues to maintain that it would only demarcate the border with Lebanon in this area following an Israeli withdrawal. I will continue my diplomatic efforts in this regard, in the framework of Prime Minister Siniora's seven-point plan, and will report to the Council on any progress thereof. However, I reiterate that progress on this issue cannot be separated from the principles and elements required for the permanent ceasefire and long-term solution identified in resolution 1701 (2006).

III. Security and safety of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

58. During the reporting period, UNIFIL faced another direct attack and a number of security threats. On 8 January 2008, an improvised explosive device was detonated by remote control as a UNIFIL vehicle passed by on the main coastal highway connecting Beirut to southern Lebanon, outside the town of Sidon. The explosion caused minor injuries to two Irish peacekeepers and material damage to the United Nations vehicle in which they were travelling. The Lebanese authorities and UNIFIL immediately launched an investigation into the incident. This was the third attack against UNIFIL since the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006), in addition to other failed attacks against the Mission, on which I have previously reported (see S/2007/392 and S/2007/641). This latest attack was perpetrated outside the area of operations along UNIFIL's main supply route with the Lebanese capital.

59. Investigations by both Lebanese and Spanish national authorities into the 24 June 2007 attack against UNIFIL, which killed six peacekeepers serving with the Spanish contingent, are ongoing. To date, no one has claimed responsibility for this attack and the perpetrators remain unknown. The Lebanese national authorities also continued their investigation into the 16 July 2007 attack against a UNIFIL military police vehicle from the Tanzanian contingent and have informed UNIFIL that one of the suspected perpetrators is under arrest.

60. Against this background of terrorist attacks against UNIFIL and in the light of continuous threats from some militant groups, including Al-Qaeda, the security and safety of UNIFIL personnel remains a matter of particular concern. Notwithstanding the obligation of all parties to respect the safety and security of UNIFIL and the responsibility of the Government of Lebanon for internal law and order, UNIFIL continues to focus on mitigating risks to its personnel, assets and installations through infrastructure enhancement projects, information analysis, and the acquisition of electronic countermeasures to jam explosive devices and micro-unmanned aerial vehicles. The unmanned aerial vehicles are to be utilized at the discretion of the Force Commander as an additional risk-mitigating asset to enhance Force protection and civilian staff security.

61. The investigative capacity of UNIFIL has been strengthened through the deployment of forensic experts. A planned international military police component will further augment the investigative capacity of the Mission, including forensic

capabilities. Troop-contributing countries have been approached to enhance UNIFIL intelligence capabilities through the establishment of a Joint Mission Analysis Centre, and the deployment of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance units.

IV. Deployment of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

62. UNIFIL continues to maintain a high level of operational readiness. As of 25 February 2008, the total strength of UNIFIL amounted to 12,707 military personnel. The Finnish, Irish and Qatari contingents completed their assignments during the reporting period; however, Ireland and Qatar retain staff officers at UNIFIL headquarters. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is engaged with troop-contributing countries in identifying replacement troops to ensure that UNIFIL remains adequately resourced. The current strength and deployment of the Force enables the troops to carry out their mandated tasks effectively throughout the area of operations. UNIFIL is currently supported by 51 United Nations Truce Supervision Organization military observers of the Observer Group Lebanon. In addition, a total of 313 international and 612 national staff members currently serve in UNIFIL.

63. The Maritime Task Force comprises four out of five required frigates and seven out of ten required corvettes/patrol boats. The number of frigates and patrol boats should not drop further, if the Task Force is to accomplish its current tasks. A ship-to-task analysis to ensure that the UNIFIL naval assets are optimally equipped to carry out their maritime tasks is being finalized. At the end of February 2008, Germany will hand over leadership of the Task Force to the European Maritime Force (EUROMARFOR), a southern European naval initiative composed of France, Italy, Portugal and Spain.

64. A comprehensive review of the Strategic Military Cell, which was requested by the General Assembly, is currently being finalized.

V. Observations

65. More than a year and a half since the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006) the deployment and activities of both UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces have contributed to the longest period of relative stability in southern Lebanon for many years and have helped to establish a new strategic environment in the area south of the Litani River. These effects are also felt in northern Israel and acknowledged by the Israeli authorities. However, a number of incidents that have occurred over the reporting period and have raised tensions in the area of operations of UNIFIL are a cause for concern. I am also concerned by the threats of open war against Israel made by the Secretary-General of Hizbullah on 14 and 22 February 2008 following the funeral of Imad Mughniyeh, assassinated on 13 February in Damascus. This rhetoric goes against the spirit and intentions of resolution 1701 (2006), which aims to achieve a permanent ceasefire. I call upon all parties to exercise the utmost restraint and to continue to abide by their stated commitments to resolution 1701 (2006).

66. The repercussions of the continuing political crisis in Lebanon, which has shut down the work of key State institutions, are also significant for the implementation

of resolution 1701 (2006). Those institutions, and the accompanying process of a national dialogue, need to be revived in order to achieve further and sustained progress on the implementation of provisions of resolution 1701 (2006). During my visit to Lebanon on 15 and 16 November 2007, I encouraged all parties to spare no efforts to find a solution to the crisis for the sake of the future of their country. On 17 December, I chaired a ministerial meeting in Paris attended by Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, France, the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Portugal (European Union Presidency), the European Commission and the European Union High Representative, Javier Solana, which issued a statement of strong support for Lebanon and its people. My representatives on the ground, especially my Special Coordinator for Lebanon, have worked to narrow the gap between the parties' positions. In addition, the United Nations continues to support regional and international initiatives seeking a peaceful solution to the crisis.

67. I am grateful to the 28 troop-contributing countries which, through their participation in UNIFIL, have enabled the Force to discharge its mandate over the reporting period. I emphasize once again the need for continued support to UNIFIL, including the commitment to contribute the necessary troops and assets to enable the Force to efficiently perform all of its mandated activities on land and at sea. I wish to strongly commend the UNIFIL Force Commander and the military and civilian peacekeeping personnel who continue to play a critical role in helping to promote peace and stability in southern Lebanon. At the same time, I remain extremely concerned for the safety and security of United Nations personnel and urge all parties to abide by their obligation to respect their safety and security.

68. The incidents that have occurred during the reporting period have raised tensions, and undermined the Mission's efforts to build trust and confidence between the parties and with the population of southern Lebanon. I would like to underline the obligations of the parties to fully respect the cessation of hostilities, and to prevent any violation of resolution 1701 (2006).

69. I am concerned that Israeli air violations continue unabated, often without any regard for the levels of tension and anger that these actions trigger on the ground. These repeated violations of resolution 1701 (2006) undermine the credibility of the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL in the eyes of the local population and, in doing so, impede the ability of UNIFIL to carry out its mandate.

70. The continued occupation by the Israel Defense Forces of the northern part of the village of Ghajar constitutes a continuing violation of Lebanon's sovereignty, resolution 1701 (2006) and the Blue Line. I call upon the Governments of Lebanon and Israel to work with the Force Commander of UNIFIL to arrive at an agreement that would ensure the withdrawal of the Israel Defense Forces south of the Blue Line, with due consideration for the legitimate humanitarian concerns of the population.

71. I remain concerned about ongoing reports and Hizbullah public statements that point to breaches of the arms embargo, in serious violation of resolution 1701 (2006). All Member States in the region, in particular the Syrian Arab Republic and the Islamic Republic of Iran, have a key responsibility in this regard. Such violations risk further destabilizing Lebanon and the whole region.

72. Effective border management is a key imperative for ensuring the security and stability of Lebanon. Achieving this will be a long-term endeavour that must continue to be led by the Lebanese authorities with sustained international support and expertise. In the course of the next reporting period, with a view to thoroughly assessing the implementation of the recommendations of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team, I intend to dispatch a team to Lebanon to carry out an assessment. I am encouraged by the determination demonstrated by the Government of Lebanon to improve its capacity in this regard, and in particular by its commitment to the success of the pilot project along its northern border with the Syrian Arab Republic. Yet it is clear that significant challenges remain to be addressed. The Syrian Arab Republic has a shared responsibility in controlling its borders with Lebanon and implementing paragraph 15 of resolution 1701 (2006).

73. I urge the Governments of the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon to take practical steps without delay towards demarcating their common border in accordance with resolutions 1701 (2006) and 1680 (2006). I will continue my diplomatic efforts on the issue of the Shab'a Farms area.

74. Following persistent efforts by the United Nations both at Headquarters and in the field to secure technical strike data regarding cluster munitions, on 5 February 2008, the Israel Defense Forces submitted some information. Preliminary findings are however that the information provided is of very limited value. I reiterate with urgency my call on the Government of Israel to provide detailed strike data on the type, quantity and specific coordinates of submunitions fired during the 2006 conflict. This crucial information would greatly enhance the rate of clearance operations in southern Lebanon and reduce the number of incidents for both civilians and mine-clearance experts.

75. I reiterate the firm demand of the international community for the parties to redouble their efforts, in coordination with the facilitator, to urgently reach a solution to the issue of the abducted Israeli soldiers and Lebanese prisoners and comply with the humanitarian demands of resolution 1701 (2006).

76. With reference to paragraph 6 of resolution 1701 (2006), I thank those Member States that have already provided assistance for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon and I urge the international community to further support the calls of the Government of Lebanon in this respect. In addition, as the backbone for the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) and a key instrument for peace and stability in Lebanon, the Lebanese Armed Forces need and merit the continued and enhanced support of the international community, in both equipment and training.

77. It continues to be my profound conviction that we must continue to exert all possible efforts to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). This and the full territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon remain interdependent.

78. Finally, I would like to thank the Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Geir Pedersen of Norway, upon the completion of his tour of duty in Lebanon, for his leadership and devotion in carrying out the important work of the United Nations in Lebanon. I wish him success in any future endeavours.

Annex

Military component of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon as at 25 February 2008[a]

Country	*Military component deployed in UNIFIL*		
	Staff officers	*Troops*	*Total*
Belgium	5	359	364
China	8	335	343
Croatia	1	0	1
Cyprus	2	0	2
France	22	1 434	1 456
Germany	7	534	541
Ghana	19	849	868
Greece	3	280	283
Guatemala	1	0	1
Hungary	4	0	4
India	13	869	882
Indonesia	7	850	857
Italy	33	2 561	2 594
Ireland	7	0	7
Korea	3	359	362
Luxembourg	0	2	2
Malaysia	7	360	367
Nepal	9	850	859
Netherlands	1	145	146
Poland	8	481	489
Portugal	5	141	146
Slovenia	0	14	14
Spain	15	1 119	1 134
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	1	0	1
Turkey	3	904	907
United Republic of Tanzania	2	75	77
Total	**186**	**12 521**	**12 707**

[a] UNIFIL is also currently supported by 51 UNTSO military observers of the Observer Group Lebanon. In the Department of Peacekeeping Operations at Headquarters, the Strategic Military Cell is currently composed of 28 staff officers.

United Nations S/2008/136

Security Council

Distr.: General
28 February 2008
English
Original: Spanish

Letter dated 27 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to write to you with regard to document S/2008/10 containing a summary statement by the Secretary-General on matters of which the Security Council is seized and on the stage reached in their consideration.

In accordance with the procedures established in the note by the President of the Security Council dated 29 August 1996 (S/1996/704) and now incorporated in the annex to the note by the President of the Security Council of 19 July 2006 (S/2006/507), I have the honour to inform you that the Government of the Republic of Cuba wishes the following items submitted by the Republic of Cuba, set out in paragraph 2 of document S/2008/10, to remain on the list of matters of which the Security Council is seized:

5. Letter dated 11 July 1960 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba (S/4378) addressed to the President of the Security Council.

6. Letter dated 31 December 1960 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba (S/4605) addressed to the President of the Security Council.

10. Complaint by Cuba (S/10993).

23. Letter dated 2 February 1960 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/21120).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Rodrigo **Malmierca Díaz**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

08-25592 (E) 030308 040308

United Nations S/2008/137

Security Council

Distr.: General
28 February 2008

Original: English

Letter dated 28 February 2008 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that your letter of 31 January 2008 (S/2008/63) has been brought to the attention of members of the Security Council.

The Security Council takes note of the completion strategy for the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) and welcomes the action taken by UNIOSIL to provide details of the proposed 20 per cent reduction in number of staff by 31 March 2008.

Council members would welcome further information in your April 2008 report on the planned drawdown of UNIOSIL between the local election scheduled for 5 July 2008 and its completion in September 2008, along with specific proposals on the mandate, structure and strength of the successor integrated political office. We would also be interested to know your plans for the United Nations police/military adviser team element.

The Security Council re-emphasizes the role of UNIOSIL in providing assistance to the local elections, national commissions and institutions for the promotion of good governance and human rights, while actively supporting the implementation of the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework and the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund to carry forward the peacebuilding process.

(*Signed*) Ricardo Alberto **Arias**
President of the Security Council

08-25586 (E) 290208

United Nations A/62/712–S/2008/138

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
3 March 2008

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-second session
Agenda item 87
Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Identical letters dated 27 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to convey herewith the letter addressed to you by Mr. Manouchehr Mottaki, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, concerning Iran's peaceful nuclear programme and the latest report of the International Atomic Energy Agency in this regard (see annex).

I would be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 87, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mohammad **Khazaee**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

08-25610 (E) 030308

Annex to the identical letters dated 27 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

At this important juncture, whereas the recent report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has declared that all outstanding issues regarding the peaceful nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran have been resolved, and has confirmed for the eleventh time that there has been no diversion in the Iranian peaceful nuclear activities, I would like to draw your attention to the following:

1. The pretexts on the basis of which the Iranian nuclear issue was put on the agenda of IAEA and then became the basis for unwarranted and unlawful action of the United Nations Security Council were the so-called ambiguities and allegations on the Iranian nuclear programme introduced by a few, certain countries which, by exaggerating those ambiguities, attempted to put into question the peaceful nature of the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran and mark it as concealment and non-transparent or unlawful behaviour.

2. The Islamic Republic of Iran, in order to remove any ambiguities about its peaceful nuclear activities and the resolution of the remaining issues, reached an understanding on 21 August 2007 on a workplan with IAEA. On the basis of the workplan, an exhaustive list of six issues, including "Research on plutonium", "P1 and P2 Centrifuges", "Source of contamination", "Uranium metal document", "Polonium 210" and "Gchine mine", were presented by the Agency to Iran. Despite the initial agreement, based on which we were supposed to address the past remaining issues, the Islamic Republic of Iran, on the basis of its goodwill and in line with further cooperation with the Agency, considered also the present issues. Therefore, negotiations on two important legal documents, i.e., "Safeguards approach document" and "Facility attachment" for the Fuel Enrichment Plant in Natanz, started and then were concluded, and finally entered into force on 30 September 2007. Accordingly, the implementation of those documents has provided necessary assurances for the verification of enrichment activities in Iran for the present time and in future. The Islamic Republic of Iran, in implementation of the workplan, has made utmost transparency and has fully cooperated with the Agency and even concluded the workplan much sooner than the scheduled timeline. It is worth mentioning that the implementation of the workplan required 18 months but the Islamic Republic of Iran implemented it within six months.

3. The report of the Agency dated 22 February 2008 has clearly and evidently declared that all six "remaining issues" have been resolved and that the Islamic Republic of Iran has answered all the questions presented by IAEA concerning outstanding issues according to the workplan and those answers are "consistent with the Agency's findings", and that IAEA "considers those questions no longer as outstanding".

4. In the said report, the Agency has also declared that the current nuclear activities in Iran are under its monitoring and the Agency has been able to continue to verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear materials and activities in Iran.

5. Thus, all the so-called justifications and flawed foundations for the Security Council's action on this issue have vanished, and it shows that the resolutions previously adopted by the Security Council lack any legal and technical justifications and originated solely from political and malicious objectives of certain countries. Naturally, the continuation of this trend would undermine the credibility of the Security Council and would weaken the integrity and position of IAEA, which should be the sole competent authority for nuclear activities of the member States, and it would represent another wrong step.

6. The Agency's report is a clear indication of the lawful, transparent and responsible behaviour of the Islamic Republic of Iran in its nuclear activities and also of the fulfilment of its obligations and commitments in that regard.

7. The great nation of Iran, along with the fulfilment of its obligations, does not demand anything other than the exercising of its inalienable rights under the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons for the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and in that regard the abuse of international bodies by certain countries would not manage to compel our nation to abandon its inalienable rights.

8. Given the above-mentioned facts, the legitimate expectation of the international community is that those States which misled international forums with their baseless allegations and accusations through their politically motivated actions and propaganda against the peaceful nuclear programme of Iran should take action to remedy their mistake.

(*Signed*) Manouchehr **Mottaki**
Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran

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Security Council

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Letter dated 4 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In my capacity as the representative of the current Chairman of the African Union, I wish to transmit herewith the communiqué on the situation in Chad adopted by the African Union Peace and Security Council at its 110th meeting, held on 18 February 2008 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and the communiqué on the situation in Chad could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Augustine P. **Mahiga**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the United Republic
of Tanzania to the United Nations
Representative of the current Chairman of the African Union

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Annex to the letter dated 4 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: English and French]

Communiqué of the 110th meeting of the Peace and Security Council

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 110th meeting held on 18 February 2008, adopted the following decision on the situation in Chad:

Council:

1. **Takes note** of the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the situation in Chad [PSC/PR/2(CX)], the statements by the representatives of Chad and the United Nations, as well as the statements made by the representatives of Libya and the Republic of Congo in their capacity as the countries mandated by the 10th ordinary session of the Assembly of the Union, held in Addis Ababa, from 31 January to 2 February 2008, to assist in finding a lasting solution to the crisis in Chad;

2. **Recalls** decision **Assembly/AU/Dec.188 (X)** on the situation in Chad adopted by the 10th ordinary session of the Assembly of the Union;

3. **Reiterates** the condemnation by the AU of the attacks perpetrated by armed groups against the Chadian Government and its rejection of any unconstitutional change of Government, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union, the Algiers' Decision, the Lomé Declaration on Unconstitutional Changes of Government and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance adopted in January 2007;

4. **Calls on** all the Chadian parties to unconditionally renounce the use of force and engage in constructive dialogue aimed at finding a peaceful solution to the problems facing their country. In this regard, Council **urges** the Chadian Government, the democratic opposition and the politico-military opposition to implement in good faith the different agreements that they signed, including the agreement of 13 August 2007, signed in N'djamena between the parties of the presidential majority and the democratic opposition, and that of 25 October 2007, signed in Syrte, Libya, between the Government and armed movements;

5. **Encourages** the Chadian Government to create conducive conditions for the pursuit and deepening of the dialogue already initiated, including ensuring the security, safety and liberty of all political stakeholders, as well as ensuring that all the political leaders who have disappeared are found in earnest and made free;

6. **Expresses appreciation** for the initiatives taken by the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi and President Denis Sassou-Nguesso of the Republic of the Congo, in conformity with the mandate given to them by the Assembly of the Union in its decision Assembly/AU/Dec.188 (X), **encourages** them to establish contact with all the Chadian parties and to review the current situation in all its aspects, in order to find a lasting solution to the problems facing Chad and contribute to the promotion of regional stability

and the principles of good neighbourness, and **calls on** all the Chadian parties to give them full and unreserved cooperation;

7. **Reiterates** its commitment to the principles of good neighbourliness and **calls on** all the countries of the region to comply with the principles of the African Union on respect for the unity and territorial integrity of Member States and to scrupulously respect the commitments that they made within the framework of the different agreements that they signed with a view to improving their bilateral relations;

8. **Underscores,** once again, the importance of a coherent and integrated regional approach identifying and addressing the root causes of the crisis in order to promote durable peace and stability in the region, as called for in communiqué PSC/PR/Comm(LXX) adopted by the 70th meeting of the PSC held on 12 February 2007;

9. **Expresses** its concern at the deterioration of the humanitarian situation and **calls on** all the parties to facilitate the work of the humanitarian organizations and access to the needy population in this respect, Council **stresses** the need for the urgent deployment of MINURCAT and EUFOR in order to facilitate the humanitarian efforts;

10. **Requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to continue to follow closely the evolution of the situation in Chad and in the region. In this regard, Council **further requests** the Chairperson to maintain and strengthen the Liaison Office of the African Union in N'djamena;

11. **Agrees** to meet in due course to review the situation, including the relations between Chad and Sudan, based on the outcome of the mediation conducted by the leaders mandated by the Assembly and any other relevant information;

12. **Decides** to remain seized of the matter.